

July Cosmopolitan

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Reaches the
Hard-to-Clean
Places





S A I L S

By Dr Frank Crane

"LET us think sometimes," writes Maurice Maeterlinck, "of the great invisible ship that carries our human destinies upon eternity.

Like the vessels of our confined oceans, she has her sails and her ballast. The fear that she may pitch or roll on leaving the roadstead is no reason for increasing the weight of the ballast by stowing the fair, white sails in the depths of the hold. They were not woven to molder side by side with cobblestones in the dark. Ballast exists everywhere; all the pebbles of the harbor, all the sands on the beach will serve for it. But sails are rare and precious things; their place is not in the murk of the well but amid the light of the tall masts, where they will collect the winds of space." The human race cannot be divided into sail-men and ballast-men. Rather each one of us has somewhat of the one and somewhat of the other nature.

Our enthusiasms, intoxicating ideals, flaming convictions—these are our sails.

Our prudence, wisdom, care, and hesitation—these are our ballast.

What I here wish to remind you of is that your real worth-whileness lies in your sails. These are the rare, wonderful, and efficient part of you.

Sails make wealth, create great works, master mankind. Any fathead can keep wealth and hold great office if he has ballast enough.

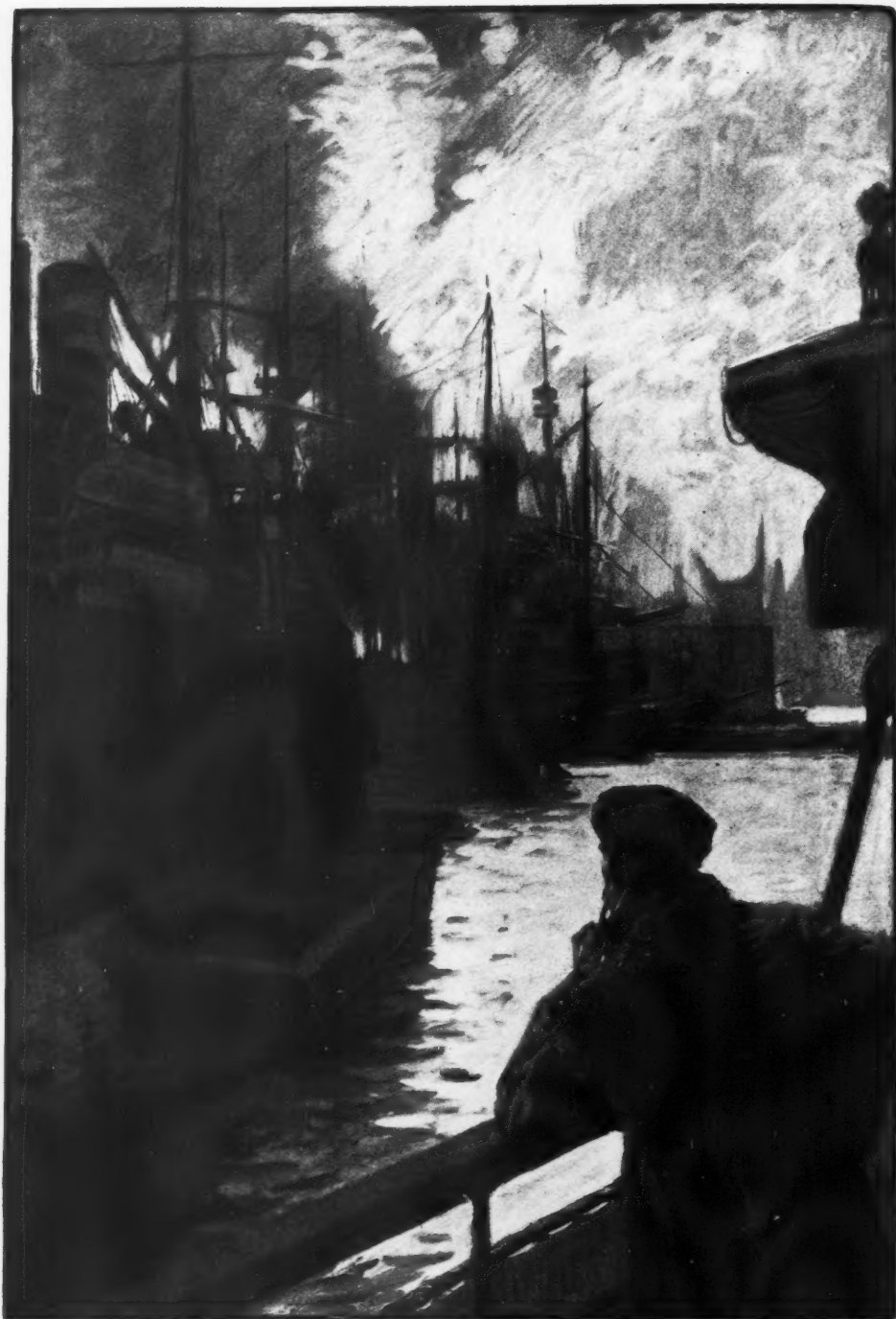
Do not be afraid to think far, ultimate thoughts, to dare believe absolute and shattering truths, utterly to ignore the practical for the reasonable, to let your heart and your mind go the limit.

So let us believe in beauty, in goodness, and in love, and that some day these shall reign over all people.

Let us believe in the triumph of justice in industry, and that all privilege shall one day cease.

Let us attack ancient frauds, impregnable and vested wrongs, and all the reenforced concrete of injustice in government, in art, and in society, with the foolish confidence of youthful spirits. Let the bone-heads be careful.

Let us set what sails we have. Let the dull and prudent and timid souls make ballast.



DRAWN BY GEORGE GIBBS

I had left Europe for no reason except to discover the sun, and there were rumors
that he was to be found in Egypt

(Egypt of the Magicians)

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Egypt of the Magicians*

By Rudyard Kipling

Illustrated by George Gibbs

EDITOR'S NOTE—The most entertaining of living writers in the English language has recently paid a visit to the oldest and most fascinating country in the world. And in this and succeeding issues of *Cosmopolitan* he is going to tell us all about it. Mr. Kipling went to Egypt as do thousands of American and English tourists every winter—as a sightseer—but his eyes were familiar with the things of the Orient, and his mind had been schooled in its philosophy of life and unconquerable logic. Consequently, in "Egypt of the Magicians" we are going to have a very different Land of the Nile from that which the ordinary traveler sees and tells of.

And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments.—Exodus vii. 22.

Try as he may, no man breaks wholly loose
From his first love, no matter who she be.
Oh, was there ever sailor free to choose,
That didn't settle somewhere near the sea?

Men must keep touch with things they used to use
To earn their living, even when they are free,
And so come back upon the least excuse—
Same as the sailor settled by the sea.

He knows he's never going on a cruise,
Because he's done and finished with the sea;
But still he likes to feel it's there to use,
If he should need it, as it used to be.

Parsons in pulpits, taxpayers in pews,
Kings on your thrones, you know as well as me
We've only one virginity to lose,
And where we lost it there our hearts will be.

I HAD left Europe for no reason except to discover the sun, and there were rumors that he was to be found in Egypt.

But I had not realized what more I should find there.

A P. & O. boat carried us out of Marseilles. A serang of lascars, with whistle, chain, shawl, and fluttering blue clothes, was at work on the baggage-hatch. Somebody bungled at the winch. The serang

called him a name unlovely in itself but awakening delightful memories in the hearer.

"O Serang, is that man a fool?"

"Very foolish, *sahib*. He comes from Surat. He only comes for his food's sake."

The serang grinned; the Surtee man grinned; the winch began again, and the voices that called: "Lower away! Stop her!" were as familiar as the friendly whiff from the lascars' galley or the slap of bare

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Egypt of the Magicians

feet along the deck. But for the passage of a few impertinent years, I should have gone without hesitation to share their rice. Serangs used to be very kind to little white children below the age of caste. Most familiar of all was the ship itself. It had slipped my memory, nor was there anything in the rates charged to remind me, that single-screws still lingered in the gilt-edged passenger trade.

Some North Atlantic passengers accustomed to real ships made the discovery, and were as pleased about it as American tourists at Stratford-on-Avon.

"Oh, come and see!" they cried. "She has *one* screw—only one screw! Hear her thump! And have you seen their old barn of a saloon? And the officers' library? It's open for two half-hours a day week-days and one on Sundays. You pay a dollar and a quarter deposit on each book. We wouldn't have missed this trip for anything. It's like sailing with Columbus."

They wandered about—voluble, amazed, and happy, for they were getting off at Port Said.

I explored, too. From the rough-ironed table-linen, the thick tooth-glasses for the drinks, the slummocky set-out of victuals at meals, to the unaccommodating regulations in the curtainless cabin, where they had not yet arrived at bunk-edge trays for morning tea, time and progress had stood still with the P. & O. To be just, there were electric fan-fittings in the cabins, but the fans were charged extra; and there was a rumor, unverified, that one could eat on deck or in one's cabin without a medical certificate from the doctor. All the rest was under the old motto: "*Quis separabit*"—"This is quite separate from other lines."

"After all," said an Anglo-Indian, whom I was telling about civilized ocean travel, "they don't want you Egyptian trippers. They're sure of us, because—" and he gave me many strong reasons connected with leave, finance, the absence of competition, and the ownership of the Bombay foreshore.

"But it's absurd," I insisted. "The whole concern is out of date. There's a notice on my deck forbidding smoking and the use of naked lights, and there's a lascarpessing about the hold-hatch just outside my cabin with a candle in a lantern."

Meantime, our one-screw tub thumped gingerly toward Port Said, because we had no mails aboard, and the Mediter-

ranean, exhausted after severe February hysterics, lay out like oil.

I had some talk with a Scotch quartermaster who complained that lascars are not what they used to be, owing to their habit (but it has existed since the beginning) of signing on as a clan or family—all sorts together.

The serang said that, for *his* part, he had noticed no difference in twenty years. "Men are always of many kinds, *sahib*. And that is because God makes men thus and thus. Not all one pattern—not by any means all one pattern." He told me, too, that wages were rising, but the price of ghee, rice, and curry-stuffs was up, too, which was bad for wives and families at Porbandar. "And that also is thus, and no talk makes it otherwise." After Suez, he would have blossomed into thin clothes and a long talk, but the bitter spring chill nipped him, as the thought of partings just accomplished and work just ahead chilled the Anglo-Indian contingent. Little by little one came at the outlines of the old stories—a sick wife left behind here, a boy there, a daughter at school, a very small daughter trusted to friends or hirelings, certain separation for so many years and no great hope or delight in the future. It was not a nice India that the tales hinted at. Here is one that explains a great deal:

There was a Pathan, a Mohammedan, in a Hindu village, employed by the village money-lender as a debt-collector, which is not a popular trade. He lived alone among Hindus, and—so ran the charge in the lower court—he wilfully broke the caste of a Hindu villager by forcing on him forbidden Mussulman food, and when that pious villager would have taken him before the head man to make reparation, the godless one drew his Afghan knife and killed the head man, besides wounding a few others. The evidence ran without flaw, as smoothly as well-arranged cases should, and the Pathan was condemned to death for wilful murder. He appealed and, by some arrangement or other, got leave to state his case personally to the Court of Revision. Said, I believe, that he did not much trust lawyers, but that if the *sahibs* would give him a hearing, as man to man, he might have a run for his money.

Out of the jail, then, he came, and, Pathanlike, not content with his own good facts, must needs begin by some fairy-tale

that he was a secret agent of the government sent down to spy on that village. Then he warmed to it. Yes, he *was* that money-lender's agent—a persuader of the reluctant, if you like—working for a Hindu employer. Naturally, many men owed him grudges. A lot of the evidence against him was quite true, but the prosecution had twisted it abominably. About that knife, for instance. True, he had a knife in his hand exactly as they had alleged. But why? Because with that very knife he was cutting up and distributing a roast sheep which he had given as a feast to the villagers. At that feast, he sitting in amity with all his world, the village rose up at the word of command, laid hands on him, and dragged him off to the head man's house. How could he have broken *any* man's caste when they were all eating his sheep? And in the courtyard of the head man's house they surrounded him with heavy sticks and worked themselves into anger against him, each man exciting his neighbor. He was a Pathan. He knew what that sort of talk meant. A man cannot collect debts without making enemies. So he warned them. Again and again he warned them, saying: "Leave me alone. Do not lay hands on me." But the trouble grew worse, and he saw it was intended that he should be clubbed to death like a jackal in a drain. Then he said, "If blows are struck, I strike, and I strike to kill, because I am a Pathan." But the blows were struck, heavy ones. Therefore, with the very Afghan knife that had cut up the mut-ton, he struck the head man. "Had you meant to kill the head man?" "Assuredly! I am a Pathan. When I strike, I strike to kill. I had warned them again and again. I think I got him in the liver. He died. And that is all there is to it, *sahibs*. It was my life or theirs. They would have taken mine over my freely given meats. Now, what'll you do with me?"

In the long run, he got several years for culpable homicide.

"But," said I, when the tale had been told, "whatever made the lower court accept all that village evidence? It was too good on the face of it."

"The lower court said it could not believe it possible that so many respectable native gentlemen could have banded themselves together to tell a lie."

"Oh! Had the lower court been long in the country?"

"It was a native judge," was the reply.

If you think this over in all its bearings, you will see that the lower court was absolutely sincere. Was not the lower court itself a product of Western civilization, and, as such, bound to play up—to pretend to think along Western lines—translating each grade of Indian village society into its English equivalent, and ruling as an English judge would have ruled? Pathans and, incidentally, English officials must look after themselves.

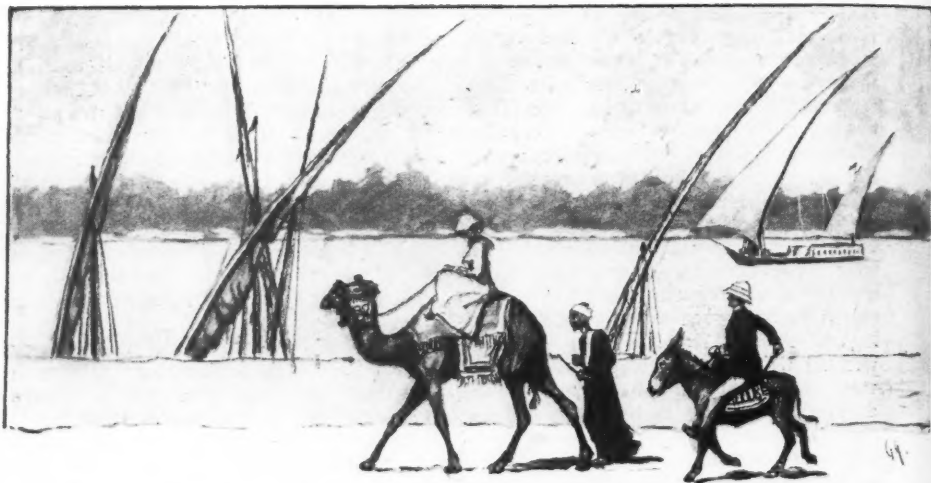
There is a fell disease of this century called "snobbery of the soul." Its germ has been virulently developed in modern cultures from the uncomplex bacillus isolated sixty years ago by the late William Makepeace Thackeray. Precisely as Major Ponto, with his plated dishes and stable-boy masquerading as footman, lied to himself and his guests so—but the "Book of Snobs" can only be brought up to date by him who wrote it.

Then, a man struck in from the Sudan—far and far to the south—with a story of a discomposed judge and a much too collected prisoner.

To the great bazaars of Omdurman, where all things are sold, came a young man from the uttermost deserts of somewhere or other and heard a gramophone. Life was of no value to him till he had bought the creature. He took it back to his village, and at twilight set it going among his ravished friends. His father, sheik of the village, came also, listened to the loud shoutings without breath, the strong music lacking musicians, and said, justly enough: "This thing is a devil. You must not bring devils into my village. Lock it up."

They waited until he had gone away and then began another tune. A second time the sheik came, repeated the command, and added that if the singing box was heard again, he would slay the buyer. But their curiosity and joy defied even this, and for the third time (late at night) they slipped in pin and record and let the djinn rave. So the sheik, with his rifle, shot his son as he had promised, and the English judge before whom he eventually came had all the trouble in the world to save that earnest gray head from the gallows. Thus:

"Now, old man, you must say guilty or not guilty."



Our window gave on to the river. Voices rose from below—unintelligible words in maddeningly familiar herself, golden in sunshine, wrinkled under strong breezes, with a crowd of creaking cargo—opened. This was life, the real, unpolluted stuff—worth a desert full

"But I shot him. That is why I am here. I——"

"Hush! It is a form of words which the law asks. (*Sotto voce.* Write down that the old idiot doesn't understand.) Be still now."

"But I shot him. What else could I have done? He bought a devil in a box, and——"

"Quiet! That comes later. Leave talking."

"But I am sheik of the village. One must not bring devils into a village. I said I would shoot him."

"This matter is in the hands of the law. I judge."

"What need? I shot him. Suppose that *your* son had brought a devil in a box to *your* village——"

They explained to him, at last, that under British rule fathers must hand over devil-dealing children to be shot by the white men (the first step, you see, on the downward path of state aid), and that he must go to prison for several months for interfering with a government shoot.

We are a great race. There was a pious young judge in Nigeria once, who kept a condemned prisoner waiting very many minutes while he hunted through the Hausa dictionary, word by word, for, "May—God—have—mercy—on—your—soul:"

And I heard another tale—about the Suez Canal this time—a hint of what may happen some day at Panama. There was a tramp steamer, loaded with high explosives, on her way to the East, and at the far end of the canal one of the sailors very naturally upset a lamp in the foc'sle. After a heated interval the crew took to the desert alongside, while the captain and the mate opened all cocks and sank her, not in the fairway but up against a bank, just leaving room for a steamer to squeeze past. Then the canal authorities wired to her charterers to know exactly what there might be in her; and it is said that the reply kept them awake of nights, for it was their business to blow her up.

Meantime, traffic had to go through, and a P. & O. steamer came along. There was the canal; there was the sunken wreck, marked by one elderly Arab in a little boat with a red flag, and there was about five foot clearance on each side for the P. & O. She went through a-tiptoe, because even fifty tons of dynamite will jar a boat perceptibly, and the tramp held more—very much more, not to mention detonators. By some absurd chance, almost the only passenger who knew about the thing at the time was an old lady, rather proud of the secret.

"Ah," she said, in the middle of the agonized glide, "you may depend upon it



accents. And beneath our balcony rolled very Nile boats waiting for a bridge to be of mummies

that if everybody knew what *I* know, they'd all be on the other side of the ship."

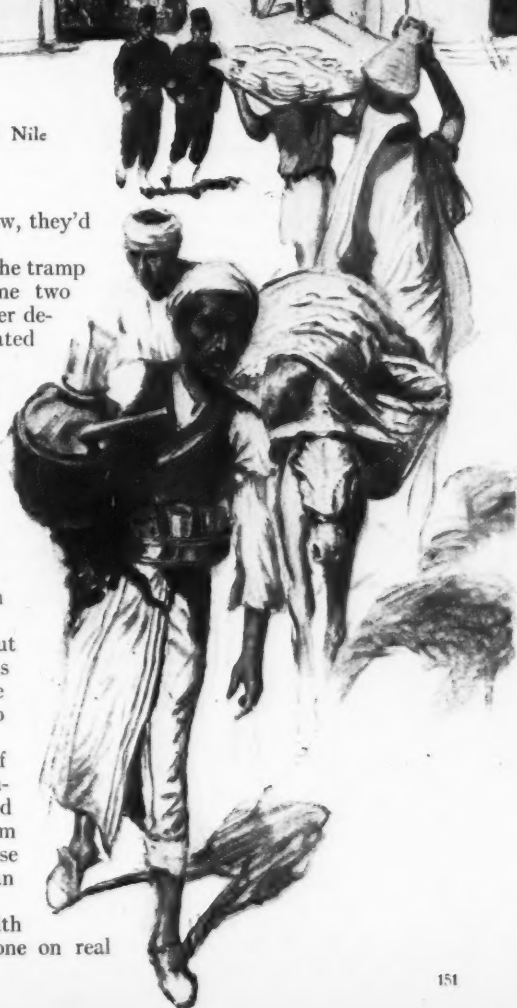
Later on, the authorities blew up the tramp with infinite precautions from some two miles off, for which reason she neither destroyed the Suez Canal nor dislocated the Sweet Water Canal alongside, but merely dug out a hole a hundred feet or a hundred yards deep, and so vanished from Lloyds' register.

But no stories could divert one long from the peculiarities of that amazing line which exists strictly for itself. There was a bathroom (occupied) at the windy end of an open alleyway. In due time the bather came out.

Said the steward, as he swabbed out the tub for his successor: "That was the chief engineer. 'E's been some time. Must 'ave 'ad a mucky job below, this mornin'."

I have a great admiration for chief engineers. They are men in authority, needing all the comforts and aids that can possibly be given them—such as bathrooms of their own close to their own cabins, where they can clean off at leisure.

It is not fair to mix them up with the ruck of passengers, nor is it done on real



ships. Nor, when a passenger wants a bath in the evening, do the stewards of real ships roll their eyes like vergers in a cathedral and say, "We'll see if it can be managed." They double down the alleyway and shout, "Matcham" or "Ponting" or "Guttman," and in fifteen seconds one of those swift three has the taps going and the towels out. Real ships are not annexes of Westminster Abbey or Borstall Reformatory. They supply decent accommodation in return for good money, and, I imagine, that their directors instruct their staffs to look pleased while at work.

Some generations back there must have been an idea that the P. & O. was vastly superior to all lines afloat—a sort of semi-

pontifical show not to be criticized. How much of the notion was due to its own excellence and how much to its passenger-traffic monopoly does not matter. To-day, it neither feeds nor tends its passengers, nor keeps its ships well enough to put on any airs at all.

For which reason, human nature being what it is, it surrounds itself with an ungracious atmosphere of absurd ritual to cover grudged and inadequate performance.

What it really needs is to be dropped into a March North Atlantic, without any lascar, and made to swim for its life between a C. P. R. boat and a North German Lloyd—till it learns to smile.

II

"Blessed be the English and all their ways and works!
Cursed be the Infidels, Heretics, and Turks!"
"Amen," quo' Jobson; "but where I used to lie
Was neither candle, bell, nor book to curse my brethren by.

But a palm tree in full bearing, bowing down, bowing down,
To a surf that drove unsparing at the brown, walled town—
Conches in a temple, oil-lamps in a dome—
And a low moon out of Africa said, 'This way home!'"

THE East is a much larger slice of the world than Europeans care to admit. Some say it begins at St. Gothard, where the smells of two continents meet and fight all through that terrible restaurant-car dinner in the tunnel. Others have found it at Venice on warm April mornings. But the East is wherever one sees the lateen sail—that shark's fin of a rig which for hundreds of years has dogged all white bathers round the Mediterranean. There is still a suggestion of menace, a hint of piracy, in the blood whenever the lateen goes by, fishing or fruiting or coasting.

"This is *not* my ancestral trade," she whispers to the accomplice sea. "If everybody had their rights I should be doing something quite different; for my father, he was the Junk, and my mother, she was the Dhow, and between the two of 'em they made Asia." Then she tacks, disorderly but deadly quick, and shuffles past the unimaginative steam-packet with her hat over one eye and a knife, as it were, up her baggy sleeves.

Even the stone-boats at Port Said, busied

on jetty extensions, show their untamed descent beneath their loaded clumsiness. They are all children of the camel-nosed dhow, who is the mother of mischief, but it was very good to meet them again in raw sunshine, unchanged in any rope and patch.

Old Port Said had disappeared beneath acres of new buildings where one could walk at leisure without being turned back by soldiers.

Two or three landmarks remained; two or three were reported as still in existence, and one Face showed itself after many years—ravaged but respectable—rigidly respectable.

"Yes," said the Face, "I have been here all the time. But I have made money, and when I die I am going home to be buried."

"Why not go home before you are buried, O Face?"

"Because I have lived here *so* long. Home is only good to be buried in."

"And what do you do, nowadays?"

"Nothing now. I live on my *rentes*—my income."

Think of it! To live icily in a perpetual cinematograph show of excited, uneasy travelers; to watch huge steamers sliding in and out all day and all night like railway trucks, unknowing and unsought by a single soul aboard; to talk five or six tongues indifferently, but to have no country—no interest in any earth except one reservation in a Continental cemetery.

It was a cold evening after heavy rain and the half-flooded streets reeked. But we undefeated tourists ran about in droves and saw all that could be seen before train-time. We missed, most of us, the Canal Company's garden, which happens to mark a certain dreadful and exact division between East and West.

Up to that point—it is a fringe of palms, stiff against the sky—the impetus of home memories and the echo of home interests carry the young man along very comfortably on his first journey. But at Suez one must face things. People, generally the most sympathetic, leave the boat there; the older men who are going on have discovered each other and begun to talk shop; no newspapers come aboard, only clipped Reuter telegrams; the world seems cruelly large and self-absorbed. One goes for a walk and finds this little bit of kept ground, with comfortable garden-gated houses on either side of the path. Then one begins to wonder, in the twilight, for choice, when one will see those palms again from the other side. Then the black hour of homesickness, vain regrets, foolish promises, and weak despair shuts down with the smell of strange earth and the cadence of strange tongues.

Cross-roads and halting-places in the desert are always favored by djinns and afrits. The young man will find them waiting for him in the Canal Company's garden at Port Said.

On the other hand, if he is fortunate enough to have won the East by inheritance, as there are families who served her for five or six generations, he will meet no ghouls in that garden, but a free and a friendly and an ample welcome from good spirits of the East that awaits him. The voices of the gardeners and the watchmen will be as the greetings of his father's servants in his father's house; the evening smells and the sight of the hibiscus and poinsettia will unlock his tongue in words and sentences that he thought he had clean



Sensible people who pray at dawn

Egypt of the Magicians

forgotten, and he will go back to the ship (I have seen) as a prince entering on his kingdom.

There was a man in our company—a young Englishman—who had just been granted his heart's desire in the shape of some raw district south of everything southerly in the Sudan, where, on two-thirds of a member of Parliament's wage, under conditions of life that would horrify a self-respecting operative, he will see perhaps some dozen white men in a year, and will certainly pick up two sorts of fever. He had been moved to work very hard for this billet by the representations of a friend in the same service, who said that it was a "rather decent sort of service," and he was all of a heat to reach Khartum, report for duty, and fall to. If he is lucky, he may get a district where the people are so virtuous that they do not know how to wear any clothes at all, and so ignorant that they have never yet come across strong drink.

The train that took us to Cairo was own sister in looks and fittings to any South African train—for which I loved her—but she was a trial to some citizens of the United States, who, being used to the Pullman, did not understand the side-corridor, solid-compartment idea. The trouble with a standardized democracy seems to be that, once they break loose from their standards, they have no props. People are *not* left behind and luggage is rarely mislaid on the railroads of the older world. There is an ordained ritual for the handling of all things, to which if a man will only conform and keep quiet, he and his will be attended to with the rest. The people that I watched would not believe this. They charged about futilely and wasted themselves in trying to get ahead of their neighbors.

Here is a fragment from the restaurant-car:

"Look at here! Me and some friends of mine are going to dine at this table. We don't want to be separated and——"

"You 'ave your number for the service, sar?"

"Number? What number? We want to dine *here*, I tell you."

"You shall get your number, sar, for the first service?"

"How's that? Where in thunder do we get the numbers, anyway?"

"I will give you the number, sar, at the time—for places at the first service."

"Yes, but we want to dine together here—right now."

"The service is not yet ready, sar."

And so on—and so on; with marchings and countermarchings, and every word nervously italicized. In the end they dined precisely where there was room for them in that new world which they had strayed into.

On one side our windows looked out on darkness of the waste; on the other at the black canal, all spaced with monstrous headlights of the night-running steamers. Then came towns, lighted with electricity, governed by mixed commissions, and dealing in cotton. Such a town, for instance, as Zagazig, last seen by a very small boy who was lifted out of a railway-carriage and set down beneath a whitewashed wall under naked stars in an illimitable emptiness because, they told him, the train was on fire. Childlike, this did not worry him. What stuck in his sleepy mind was the absurd name of the place and his father's prophecy that when he grew up he would "come that way in a big steamer."

So all his life, the word "Zagazig" carried memories of a brick shed, the flicker of an oil-lamp's floating wick, a sky full of eyes, and an engine coughing in a desert at the world's end; which memories returned in a restaurant-car jolting through what seemed to be miles of brilliantly lighted streets and factories. No one at the table had even turned his head for the battle-fields of Kassassin and Tel-el-Kebir. After all, why should they? That work is done, and children are getting ready to be born who will say: "I can remember Gondokoro (or El-Obeid or some undreamed of Clapham Junction, Abyssinia-way) before a single factory was started, before the overhead traffic began. Yes, when there was a fever—actually fever—in the city itself!"

The gap is no greater than that between to-day's and t'other day's Zagazig—between the horsed vans of the Overland Route in Lieutenant Waghorn's time and the shining motor that flashed us to our Cairo hotel through what looked like the suburbs of Marseilles or Rome.

Always keep a new city till morning. "In the daytime," as it is written in the Perspicuous Book, "thou hast long occupa-



DRAWN BY GEORGE OTTEN

Mad to sit up on camels and asses, constrained to throw down silver from both hands, at once a child and a warlock—this thing must come to the Nubian sheer out of the "Thousand and One Nights"

Egypt of the Magicians

tion." Our window gave on to the river, but before one moved toward it one heard the thrilling squeal of the kites—those same thievish companions of the road who, at that hour, were watching every Englishman's breakfast in every compound and camp from Cairo to Calcutta.

Voices rose from below—unintelligible words in maddeningly familiar accents. A black boy in one blue garment climbed, using his toes as fingers, the tipped mainyard of a Nile boat and framed himself in the window. Then, because he felt happy, he sang, all among the wheeling kites. And beneath our balcony rolled very Nile himself, golden in sunshine, wrinkled under strong breezes, with a crowd of creaking cargo-boats waiting for a bridge to be opened.

On the cut-stone quay above, a line of cab drivers—a *ticca-gharri* stand, nothing less—lollid and chaffed and tinkered with their harnesses in every beautiful attitude of the ungirt East. All the ground about was spotted with chewed sugar-cane—first sign of the hot weather all the world over.

Troops with startlingly pink faces (one would not have noticed this yesterday) rolled over the girder bridge between churning motors and bubbling camels, and the whole long-coated loose-sleeved Moslem world was awake and about its business, as befits sensible people who pray at dawn.

I made haste to cross the bridge and to hear the palms in the wind on the far side. They sang as nobly as though they had been true coconuts, and the thrust of the north wind behind them was almost as open-handed as the thrust of the Trades. Then came a funeral—the sheeted corpse in the shallow cot, the brisk-pacing bearers (if he was good, the sooner he is buried the sooner in heaven; if bad, bury him swiftly for the sake of the household)—either way, as the Prophet says, do not let the mourners go too long weeping and hungry—the women behind, tossing their arms and lamenting, and men and boys chanting low and high.

They might have come forth from the Taksali Gate in the city of Lahore on just such a cold weather morning as this, on their way to the Mohammedan burial-grounds by the river. And the veiled countrywomen, shuffling side by side, elbow pressed to hip, and eloquent right hand

pivoting round, palm uppermost, to give value to each shrill phrase, might have been the wives of so many Punjabi cultivators but that they wore another type of bangle and slipper. A knotty-kneed youth sitting high on a donkey, both amuleted against the evil eye, chewed three purplish feet of sugar-cane, which made one envious as well as voluptuously homesick, though the sugar-cane of Egypt is not to be compared with that of Bombay.

Hans Breitmann writes somewhere:

Oh, if you live in Leyden town
You'll meet, if troot pe told,
Der forms of all der freunds dot tied
When du werst six years old.

And they were all there under the chanting palms—saices, orderlies, peddlers, water-carriers, street-cleaners, chicken-sellers and the slate-colored buffalo with the china-blue eyes being talked to by a little girl with the big stick. Behind the hedges of well-kept gardens squatted the brown gardener, making trenches indifferently with a hoe or a toe, and under the municipal lamp-post lounged the bronze policeman—a touch of Arab about mouth and lean nostril—quite unconcerned with a ferocious row between two donkey-men. They were fighting across the body of a Nubian who had chosen to sleep in that place. Presently, one of them stepped back on the sleeper's stomach. The Nubian grunted, elbowed himself up, rolled his eyes, and pronounced a few utterly dispassionate words. The warriors stopped, settled their headgear, and went away as quickly as the Nubian went to sleep again. This was life, the real, unpolluted stuff—worth a desert full of mummies. And right through the middle of it—hooting and kicking up the Nile—passed a Cook's steamer all ready to take tourists to Assuan. From the Nubian's point of view she, and not himself, was the wonder—as great as the Swiss-controlled, Swiss-staffed hotel behind her, whose lift, maybe, the Nubian helped to run. Marids and afrits, guardians of hidden gold, who choke or crush the rash seeker; encounters with the long-buried dead in a Cairo back alley; undreamed-of promotions, and suddenly lit loves are the stuff of any respectable person's daily life; but the white man from across the water, arriving in hundreds with his unveiled women folk, who builds himself flying-rooms and talks along wires, who flees up



The guarded and desirable city of Cairo, to whose people, male and female, Allah has given subtlety in abundance

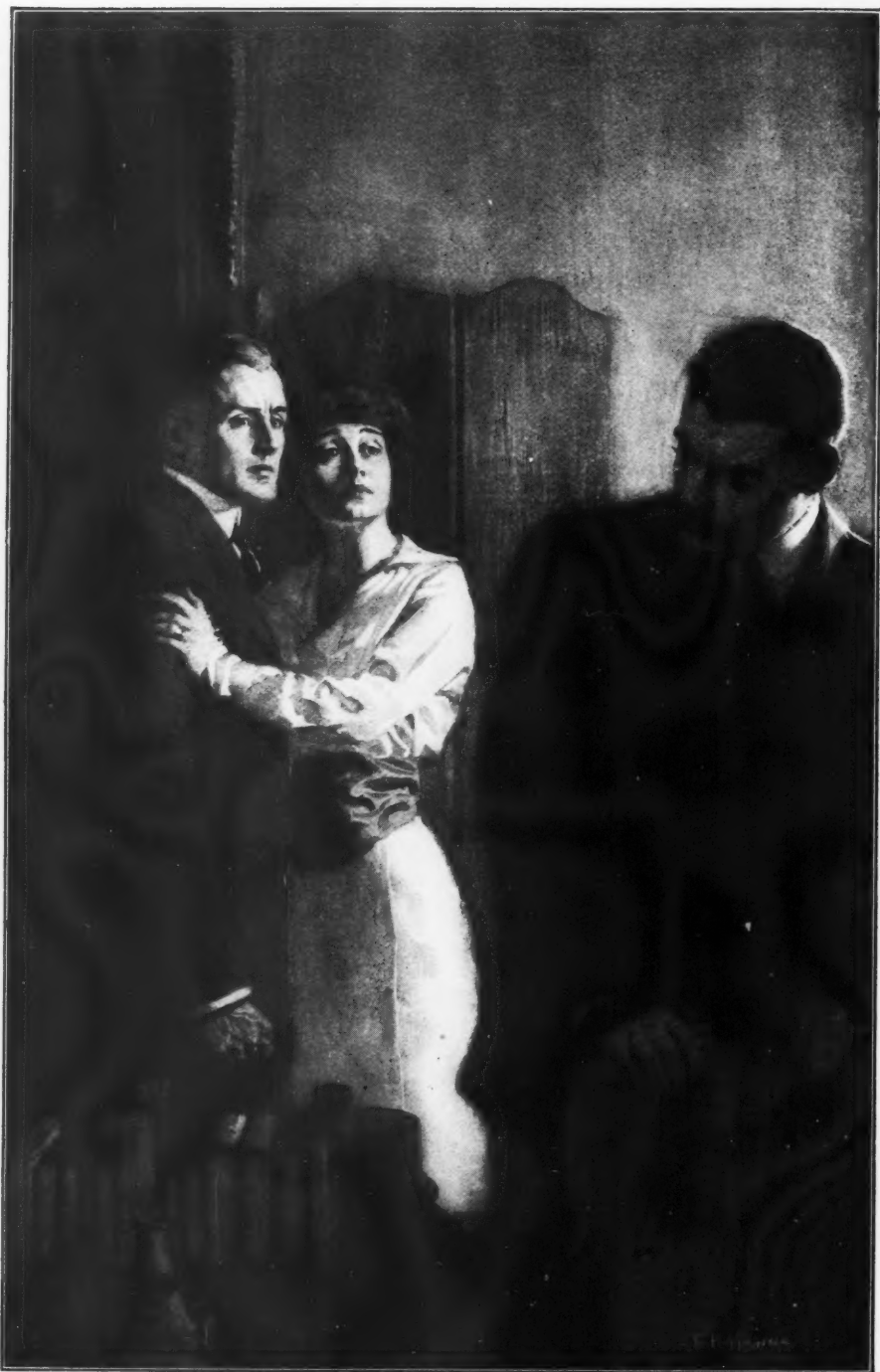
and down the river, mad to sit up on camels and asses, constrained to throw down silver from both hands, at once a child and a warlock—this thing must come to the Nubian sheer out of the “Thousand and One Nights.” At any rate, the Nubian was perfectly sane. Having eaten, he slept in God’s own sunlight, and I left him, to visit the fortunate and guarded and desirable city of Cairo, to whose people, male and female, Allah has given subtlety in abundance. Their jesters are known to have surpassed in refinement the jesters of Damascus, as did their twelve police captains the hardest and most corrupt of Bagdad in the tolerant days of

Harun-al-Raschid; while their old women, not to mention their young wives, could deceive the Father of Lies himself. Delhi is a great place—most bazaar story-tellers in India make their villain hail from there; but when the agony and intrigue are piled highest and the tale halts till the very last breathless sprinkle of cowries has ceased to fall on his mat, why then, with wagging head and hooked forefinger, the story-teller goes on:

“But there was a man from Cairo, an Egyptian of the Egyptians, who”—and all the crowd knows that a bit of real metropolitan devilry is coming.

The next instalment of *Egypt of the Magicians* will appear in the August issue.





DRAWN BY T. S. HANNA

"Don't call him names," said Margaret. "I have been listening, and there aren't any names that—quite express it. Let the *thing* go!"

(*The Thing*)

The Thing

This story portrays a situation that occurs all too frequently in married life. As Lapsley says, God makes men like Conner, plenty of them, too many of them. A young wife, with two children and a devoted husband, falls into the clutches of an unscrupulous pursuer of women and becomes infatuated with him. She thinks she cannot live without him. What, in this case, is the husband to do? There are several primitive things which would obviously suggest themselves. But would they recover his wife for him? Would they not cause her to cling all the more to her new love? How one clear-thinking husband handled such a domestic crisis forms the plot of one of the best stories Mr. Morris has written.

By Gouverneur Morris

Author of "A Perfect Gentleman of Pelham Bay Park," "The Penalty," etc.

Illustrated by T. K. Hanna

"**B**UT if I'm not to see him any more, I'll just die."

Lapsley could not bear to look at his wife. Her eyes were those of a child who has been terribly hurt and does not understand why. She was making a brutal assault upon his chivalry and generosity; and he feared that, if he looked at her once too often, he might depart from the path which seemed to him that of honor, duty, and justice. So it was not directly that he spoke to her but over his shoulder, his face averted.

"I promised," he said, "to stand by you in sickness and death. This is sickness——"

"If I am not to see him," she said, "it will be death."

Lapsley sank deep into thought, his chin in his hands.

"You think so," he said, presently. "But isn't it just possible that you are overrating the strength of your affections? I can remember when you thought you felt this way about me."

She could not make any reply to this.

"Do you think," he said, "that if he is not to see you, it will kill him?"

"He's so strong!" she exclaimed.

Praise of the other man emboldened Lapsley to look at his wife. That phrase of hers must fade from his memory if he could be moved by any foolish gush of pity to the brain. So he looked at her, not coldly or sneeringly but with frank astonishment in his eyes.

"Strong?" he said. "I don't understand."

"If he wasn't strong," she said, "you and I wouldn't be talking together. If he had asked me to go away with him, I would have gone. I couldn't say 'no' to any one I loved. But he only thinks of me."

"When a strong man," said Lapsley, "finds that he is falling in love with another man's wife and that she is showing symptoms of falling in love with him, he gets out. He doesn't allow matters to reach a crisis, first. Conner only thinks of you? But he is not willing to run off with you. Is that strength, or is it fear?"

"Fear!" Her voice was withering. "He, afraid! Perhaps you think he is afraid of you!"

Lapsley swallowed hard, and then, in a very gentle voice,

"Margaret," he said, "you will only make it harder for yourself in the end if you allow your infatuation for Conner to make you feel that I am all sorts of a villain. You've fallen out of love with me—but not for cause. I've been a loyal and affectionate husband and a very proud father. If we live rather better than we did when we were first married, it's because I've worked hard. I've sent you and the kids to cool places in summer and to warm places in winter. It wasn't my fault if I couldn't come, too. I had to stay in New York and hunt for the money. I reproach myself for a thousand and one little sins of omission and of commission—but nothing very big, nothing very

The Thing

wicked or very heartless. You can't help turning *from* me, I'll admit that. You *could* have helped it when you first felt that you were turning. But, no matter—we'll forget that. But, my dear," and he threw his hands out in appeal, "don't turn *against* me!"

She was silent.

"And my love for you," he went on, "is just as young and big as it ever was. Doesn't *that* matter in the *least*, any more?"

"If it wasn't for that," she cried, "do you think I'd be here, now? Do you think I enjoy hurting you?"

"I should think the children would have some hold upon you. Until this happened you were everything to them that a mother should be. I can understand a sane woman leaving her husband, but not her children. Don't they count, any more?"

"I think," she said slowly, "that you know how much I love them. But if they needed me and he needed me, I should have to go to *him*."

"You *are* sick," said Lapsley, and his first nervous thrill of jealousy shot through him and made pictures in his brain—pictures in which he was not the man. For the first time in his life he understood why it may come to pass that one man should kill another. He laughed harshly.

"You're weak enough," he said, "by your own confession;" and, with a kind of savage contempt, "let's thank God that Conner is strong!" And he mimicked her earlier speech—"so strong!"

She raised her great eyes, filled with tears.

"You can say what you like about me. But I won't listen to anything against him. Perhaps I know him a little better than you do. And I know what I know."

Lapsley paced the length of the room a number of times. He came to a halt at a window which overlooked the children's playground. Here they had a heap of clean white sand, an Indian tent, their little wagon, their shovels and tin pails. He drew a very long breath and turned once more to his wife.

"Honey," he said, "I think you would get over this sickness quicker and easier if you had something definite to think about, to plan about. For instance, if you were going to have another baby—"

"You don't realize what you're saying," she said quickly. "It's bad enough for a woman when she loves the man with all her

heart, but when she loves another man! If *that's* what you are thinking about—why, I'd rather kill myself."

Again that nervous thrill of jealousy rushed through Lapsley and shook him to the bone. It was only by a supreme exertion of will that he controlled himself. For he had suddenly understood, for the first time in his life, how it comes to pass that one man kills another man—and the woman, too.

He spoke, at last, in a dry, cutting voice.

"It seems," he said, "that the worst thing we can do is to talk things over—peacefully. It is best for the children—you and I no longer count, having failed in the great adventure—it is best for the children that we continue to live together, ostensibly man and wife. You are not to meet Conner any more. In time you will be sufficiently cured to take a proper amount of comfort in your love for your children and in theirs for you. As for me, I shall continue to love you all and to provide."

"Before I say that I won't see him any more—" here she began to cry, but not sufficiently to interfere with speech, "I've got to see him—once."

"What's the use? You only make it harder."

"It's enough that I see a use in it. And it's my condition. And I *will* see him once more, with your consent or without it. And if it's to be without your consent—why, you needn't expect me back."

Lapsley believed her.

"What's the idea?" he asked. "Why must you see him? Do you still hope that he will fling his gauntlet to society and run off with you?"

She looked him in the face for a long time.

"Some husbands," she said, "wouldn't want to go on living with a wife that didn't love them—"

"I shouldn't think of giving you a divorce," said Lapsley, "if that is what you are driving at. If once since our marriage I had been faithless to you in thought or deed, it would be different. But in that way my conscience is immaculate. No; I'm not going to do the usual thing—knock my reputation for decency gallywat just to please a spoiled child who wants a new toy."

"Then it's part forever," she wailed, "forever."

Here something, conscience perhaps, pushed a new thought into Lapsley's brain.

him in that time, you still wish to marry Conner, I will give you a divorce, providing, of course, that he still wishes to marry you."

She smiled peacefully, almost happily.

What is a year to a great passion? She would see her love once



"You could have helped it when you first felt that you were turning. But, no matter—we'll forget that. But, my dear," and he threw out his hands in appeal, "don't turn against me!"

"Look here," he said; "there's no such thing as forever. When I call you a spoiled child crying for a new toy, I think I'm describing you correctly. But I'm not sure. I may be doing you a great injustice. If I was sure that your love for Conner was going to last forever, why I wouldn't stand in your way. But how do I know that, once married to Conner, history wouldn't repeat itself? Are you sure that, in a few years, you wouldn't tire of him as you have tired of me, and fail in your duty and your vows—as you have already failed? I said there is no such thing as forever. I was wrong. You have ended our happiness, yours and mine, forever. There's no denying that. But that you are in love with Conner forever and ever, world without end, I don't for one moment believe."

"You don't know."

"No; I'm only judging the capacity of your stamina by past performances. You thought you were in love with me forever and ever. And you took some very solemn oath to that effect, in church, before witnesses."

"But you say that if you could be sure that this time it's to be lasting, you'd—"

"I stand by that. If a year from to-day, not having seen him or corresponded with

more, for a few minutes, to explain, and then he would go away, sure of her as she of him, and in a year all would be well with them.

"I'll have to see him once," she said, "to explain."

"You could write."

She shook her head with an air of absolute finality.

"Very well," he said; "if you must—you must. But get it over. It won't be very pleasant for me while it's going on."

Mrs. Lapsley ran to the telephone. Ten minutes later, Conner was getting out of his car at the front gate. During the interview, Lapsley played horse, Indian, and bandit with his two children. Once something bright and shiny fell from his pocket to the sand. The boy gave a cry of joy. He had recognized father's "wewolver" and wanted to play with it, but father wouldn't let him.

"Some other time, sonny," he said. "It's loaded. It might go off."

II

CONNER was a handsome animal—very tall, very broad, a notable figure in any assemblage of men. He was a man of few words and fewer motions, admirable in dress and carriage. Such wisdom as he had was the fruit of experiences. There were few situations either of personal or financial affairs upon which he was not able to shed light. He rode well, danced beautifully, shot straight, and at cards, whether he lost or won, never appeared in the least moved or uncomfortable. He was popular and had no friends.

Having left his motor, he approached the house neither slowly nor hurriedly, a man of poise, sure of himself but without swagger. Mrs. Lapsley opened the front door herself.

A smile illumined his grave expression, and he said,

"So Lapsley knows?"

"Yes. But how do you know?"

"Your voice over the telephone. How did he take it? I am sorry for him."

She led the way into the dark hall and then turned. He took her in his arms, not fervently but with a kind of firm strength, and gave her one long, deliberate kiss on the lips.

Without a word they walked through the hall and into the living-room.

"How did he take it?" asked Conner, for the second time.

"He was kind and hard by turns," she said.

Conner said nothing.

"He practically forced me to tell," she went on. "He hasn't been easy about us for a long time, and all of a sudden he said that I was seeing altogether too much of you, that people were talking, and that it must stop."

"He *would* feel," said Conner, "that he was the only judge. I am sorry for him."

He squared his great shoulders and smiled upon her reassuringly.

"I suppose," he said, "that we ought to have seen it coming. I am glad that he wasn't violent and absurd. Well, my dear, whether we saw it coming or not doesn't matter. It has come, and it is everything to me."

"Truly?"

He merely smiled.

"He said I might see you this once," she said, "and then not any more."

"What did you say?"

"He said that if at the end of a year we felt the way we do now, he would step out—let me get a divorce. But he wants us to wait a year—to see if we *really* care."

"If we really care!"

Then they both laughed softly.

"And what did you say?"

"I agreed to wait. What else *could* I do?"

But, of course, I'll do whatever *you* say."

"A year," said Conner, "is a short time when friends are together; but when friends are apart it is a very long time. His idea is to test our love?"

She nodded.

"Well," Conner continued, "I see his point. He can only guess at the state of our feelings. We are the only persons who can really know."

"But what do you think we ought to *do*?"

He caught her suddenly in his arms, strained her hard against his broad breast, and as suddenly released her. It was these sudden virtuous tidings of passionate preliminaries that had probably led Mrs. Lapsley to use the expression, "He is *so* strong," and to believe that he was. On the present occasion, Conner fancied that he had heard a floor-board creak in the next room. He was not a coward; but the notion of being butchered by a jealous husband was repugnant to him. Furthermore, though not afraid of scandal or public opinion, he was not ambitious to brave either. "I think," he said, presently, "that I ought to have a talk with your husband. Perhaps if he realized how serious we are, he would forego some part of this precious year of probation. I think that perhaps I could persuade him. Anyhow, it is right that I should talk with him. If I went away without seeing him, I should feel that I had retired under fire. It won't be pleasant, but it will be pleasanter than remembering that one didn't." He smiled away her very obvious anxiety. "It won't be agreeable, my dear, but it won't be violent. I'll ask him to be a little more generous—to do as he would be done by. I think when he realizes that everything I have in the world is worthless to me without you—"

"And that everything I have is worthless without you!"

"Is he in the house somewhere?"

"No; he's in the garden, playing with the babes. Oh, I could cry, I'm so unhappy about *him*!"

"Pretty rough! Pretty rough treatment!" said Conner. "But life doesn't wear gloves."

"I'll tell him that you want to talk with him, shall I? You'll wait here."

She caught up her garden-hat from the seat of a chair but did not put it on. From a window Conner could see her hurrying down a garden path swinging the hat in one hand. The expression of his composed face was appraising rather than passionate. Prettier women and better made women were to be had for small sums of money; he wondered why he should be willing to pay so much for this particular one. He wondered how much he was willing to pay. And he said to himself, "Anything short of scandal, and the sooner the better." Then he perceived Lapsley coming through the garden with long, nervous strides, and began to consider what he should say to him.

They smiled at each other. Lapsley's smile was awkward and forced; Conner's was easy, natural, and courteous.

"Thank you for seeing me," he said.

"Not at all. Don't mention it," said Lapsley.

Then there was a moment of silence.

"We may as well confess," said Conner, "that it's a little difficult for either of us to make a start. That confession will perhaps make the difficulty less. I owe you an apology," and he was all grave graciousness, "and yet the hurt to you was inevitable." His voice strengthened on the last word. And he repeated it, "inevitable."

"I shan't dispute with you," said Lapsley; "but it seems to me that one or other of you ought to have seen it coming and stepped aside in time."

"For myself," said Conner, "it was like sudden trumpets in the night. As for Margaret—she is only a child."

"A favorite excuse," said Lapsley, "of young women of twenty-eight who have had children by one man and won't be happy till they have had children by another."

The smile had faded from

his lips, and he looked hard and gray, like granite.

"There is no use," he went on, "my trying to take the thing as a joke. My logic tells me that other men must have been unhappier than I am at this moment; but my feelings tell me that this is not so, and that I am the first man who ever suffered. Margaret, in the same way, feels that her infatuation for you is for eternity. And it is barely possible that you feel the same about yours for her."

"Why do you say 'barely possible?'"

"Because of your reputation. To Margaret I have said nothing against you. What would have been the use? The cast-off



He caught her suddenly in his arms, strained her hard against his broad breast

The Thing

husband is a poor witness against the successful lover."

"So I have a reputation. What sort of a reputation?"

"One in which plenty of men would take a sort of satanic pride. Margaret is not the first happily married woman whom you have taught to eat out of your hand. Mine is not the first home that you have brought down in ruins. God makes men like you, plenty of them, too many of them. I don't know why; I don't know exactly how you differ from other men, yet to other men the fact that you do differ is always known. Women know it, too. I heard one say of you, 'He has a certain liquid flame in his eye.' It doesn't matter. But men like you are only happy while you are enticing; having enticed, your eyes with the flame in them begin to rove again, seeking whom they may scorch next. That is why I said that it was 'barely possible' that you thought you loved my wife with an eternal passion. If you do think it, then you are one of those mentally deficient persons who are incapable of learning anything from personal experience. You are the thief who confesses his theft but denies that he is a criminal."

"I see one thing," said Conner, "that to ask you to be generous with us would be a waste of words. We are to be put on probation for a year, like a boy and girl who don't know their own minds. Is that it? And may I see Margaret for a moment—to say good-by?"

"That isn't it," said Lapsley. "And as for saying good-by to Margaret, it may not come to that."

Conner waited grave and attentive.

"I have just been playing with my kids," said Lapsley, "and it occurred to me, as it often does, that I haven't a damned thing to leave them. When I said that you and Margaret must wait a year, I was thinking of myself. I *talked* about them; but I wasn't *thinking* about them. Now, I am. What will become of you and Margaret, I don't know. I think I hope you will be happy. No. That's not it." A dazzling smile lighted the gray, weary face for an instant of time. "I hope that Margaret will be happy, and I hope that you won't."

Conner bowed a little, and he, too, smiled. His head was not made of wood, and Lapsley's precise meaning had penetrated it and been welcomed by approval.

"And as to what will become of me," Lapsley continued, "nobody knows. The kids, however, can and must be saved out of the wreck. So much is clear to me where everything else is pitch black. Margaret has been an inspiration to me, and I have worked very hard. With Margaret gone, I shall not work so hard. I shan't feel up to it—not for a long time, anyhow. So it seems to me that if the kids' future is wrapped up with mine, it looks pretty blank for them. Now, you are a rich man, Conner."

Not a muscle of Conner's face moved nor of his body. Yet there he stood, as deprecating as if he had whined aloud and made feverish gestures with the palms of his hands uppermost.

"If I am to get out of your way," said Lapsley, "you must put money in trust for my two children and for Margaret. I have always said that I would give my life to promote their happiness, and, by the ever-living God, I am ready!"

Conner's eyebrows rose a thirty-second of an inch.

"There will be no divorce," said Lapsley, "or any scandal. Nothing but an accidental death."

Conner spoke very gravely.

"I won't stand for that, Lapsley. There shall be no blood on my head—even for Margaret."

"Divorce, then?"

Conner bowed his head a little. Then he smiled and said,

"Somebody must name the figures."

"The figures," said Lapsley, "are a quarter of a million apiece."

For the first time during the interview Conner lost control of that mask behind which he concealed his genuine emotions.

"A quarter of a million apiece!" he exclaimed. And then, eager to retrieve his error, "I cannot understand," he said, "how a man can talk of a woman he professes to love and of her children in the same breath with money."

"I noticed that you seemed even startled by the fact," said Lapsley, "or, was it by the sum?"

Conner said nothing.

"Come, then," said Lapsley, and his voice began to rise; "I'm not adamant. It is possible that I can be jewed down. How much for the woman? We both love her; so in our eyes, at least, she is beautiful



"The figures," said Lapsley, "are a quarter of a million apiece." For the first time during the interview Conner lost control of that mask behind which he concealed his genuine emotions

and desirable. What price for Margaret? This is no mere impulse of the overnourished blood. In this crisis, souls are involved, and grand passions such as have never been experienced before——"

"Lapsley," said Conner, "you are talking very wild. You wish me to do something for your children?"

"And for Margaret. I don't trust you any too much. You are one of the men with the liquid flame in their eyes."

"But two hundred and fifty thousand apiece! Three quarters of a million altogether! You are very free with another man's money, Lapsley."

"You have been very free with another man's happiness. But to a man of your wealth! Why, if I had it and loved a girl, it would seem nothing to give. It would seem mighty little if I just had a good, honest mash on her!"

"Why, man," said Conner, "I haven't got it!"

"No rich man has it; but he can get it. Well, what *have* you got? Imagine that I have a house for rent and that my agent has told you confidentially that he fancies that I might consider an offer?"

Conner wet his lips. Then he said:

"I'll put a hundred thousand in trust for each of them—that's enough, in all conscience. Why, it's a regular hold-up!"

"Three hundred thousand for the woman you *love*—a hold-up? Well, I'm *done* with you! *Gentlemen* don't bargain. I have your word of honor that you will do this?"

"In exchange," said Conner, "for an expeditious divorce."

"And not a cent more?"

"Not a cent more!"

"Not a cent more!"

And then Lapsley laughed, and it wasn't pleasant to hear. Then he turned upon Conner.

"Of course, you've told her that everything you have is hers. That for her you would face poverty, love in a cottage. That you would even live in a country where there are no other women. But when it comes to a show-down, you, with all your millions, will give three hundred thousand and not a cent more! You cur, you swine, you male flirt, you——"

A soft little hand fell upon his shoulder.

"Don't call him names," said Margaret.

"I have been listening, and there aren't any names that—quite express it. Let the *thing* go!"



DRAWN BY J. M. GARDNER ROPER

She saw Agnes waver toward Cameron, who was standing by the mantelpiece, and
in another moment she was in his arms

If Youth Were All

"You can't theorize about marriage or sentimentalize over it," says one of the characters in this story; "you've got to live it, and then it's only your individual problem." Do you agree with this and think it good, sound reasoning? Has the problem that confronted Eileen ever come into your own life? Whether it has or it hasn't, we are sure you will appreciate the subtle charm of this story. Its theme is exactly the sort of thing that Mrs. Woodrow treats better than any American fiction-writer to-day, and we are glad for your sakes to present her finest work in the pages of *Cosmopolitan*.

By Mrs. Wilson Woodrow

Author of "Sailing To-morrow," "The Devil's Daughter," etc.

Illustrated by J. H. Gardner Soper

MARRIAGE is a journey of three differing but equally definite stages. In youth, the Garden of Eden is rediscovered and appropriated, but the angel with the flaming sword attends strictly to business and sees to it that no care-free young persons ever linger too long in that demesne—neither, having once passed through the gates, are they permitted to return. It is then, once out upon the highway, that they begin to realize the truth of the industrious ant's epigrammatic remark to the improvident nightingale, "Do you not know that winter follows summer and that all roads lead to the desert?"

The great Desert of Monotony is the next stage, and is usually entered upon in middle life. Once in it, it is easy to lose the way, forget all bearings, and stumble on, together and yet divided, dulled and deadened by the dreary sameness of the environment. If the two who have crossed the desert emerge from it still united, the third stage of the journey lies before them. That is the Valley of Contentment, or—Resignation. Opinion is divided as to the correct term.

The Camerons had already reached the desert and crossed its boundary. They were approaching the late forties, but admirably concealed the fact while appearing to ignore it. They had a charming house and really enchanting gardens on the north shore of Long Island, and were, in a word, a rather typical, well-to-do American couple. In New York, Mr. Cameron had offices which affirmed his success and standing as

a lawyer, while Mrs. Cameron might be said to balance his achievements with her own social and charitable activities. They had two sons—sources of parental pride rather than anxiety—the elder of whom was in South Africa on an engineering expedition, while the younger was still in college.

Not much of a suggestion of vast, arid wastes in such an environment, but the Desert of Monotony is a psychological, not a physical, fact, and is beset with its own peculiar trials and dangers.

To the Garden of Eden its serpent. To the Desert of Monotony its situation. Eileen Cameron had just glimpsed it, just grasped the fact that such a thing could be—the situation.

The girl, Agnes Collingwood, might be said to personify it—a picture, as she sat on the arm of a chair—the long, limp line of the young girl of to-day, beginning in bronze hair and ending in silk stockings of the thinnest mesh, and slippers with twinkling cut-steel buckles. Her brown eyes were flashing up at Cameron; her lips were parted.

Eileen's gaze traveled from her to Donald, a personable man of nearly fifty, well set up, distinguished, good-looking. Then a real surprise and resentment showed for a moment in her dark eyes. How could Don, even allowing for an insatiable masculine desire for flattery, be willing to accept, yes, more, to court the small, unflavored offerings of a girl of eighteen. Caviar—she could understand that that might pique and interest him—any man, but bread and butter!

"You're making fun of me," pouted Ag-

nes, "and you're trying to get me to reveal my heart's secrets; but I shan't."

"Not even to your father confessor?" insinuated Cameron, bending toward her, smiling amusedly, conscious mastery in his keen, gray eyes.

"No." Agnes shook her head positively, but her long lashes touched the scarlet of her cheeks. Whether she were a beautiful or even a pretty girl was a question, but she embodied all the charm, the wistful, almost poignant appeal of youth.

"That won't help you," returned Cameron; "I'm clairvoyant in such matters." His glance was more than gallant; it was worse—as Eileen felt, with a strange, shrinking chill at her heart—it was appreciative.

"Ridiculous!" Eileen said to herself, gazing from the girl laughing, blushing, launching her schoolgirl parries, daring her quick retorts to Don, drawing her out, baiting her, heckling her, still with his amused smile and that odd little light in his eyes. The scene, so light on the surface, had, she felt instinctively, meanings, sea deep, that flowed still and dark and dim between them.

For one laughing minute, as the two bantered, their eyes met and clung. Eileen could see those faintly discerned, almost unsuspected meanings surge to the surface. The girl's lids fell in time.

"How do you stand such insufferable vanity, Mrs. Cameron?" There was a little excited, almost frightened catch in her voice.

"Oh, I got used to it long ago!" Eileen returned, as lightly as she could. She rose, and, saying something about the beauty of the night and her longing for a breath of air, caught up a wrap and stepped out on to the wide porch.

She walked up and down once or twice, but in this new confusion of her mind—this strange chaos of her emotions—the porch seemed to confine and cramp her. She wanted to be out in those wider spaces which shone with a pale, indefinite light beyond the pillars of the porch. She crossed the lawn, the dead leaves rustling under her feet, and entered the garden. There the paths were faintly discernible, but on either side of them in the flower-beds, the color and splendor of the day were translated by night into flat, black-and-gray masses.

Eileen drew a deep breath; there was air here. She pressed her fingers to her temples; her skin felt hot. This situation, bewildering and just divined, had arisen from

the same old triangle, three persons bound together by subtle ties—and one too many. Where had been her discretion, her knowledge of life and human nature, that she had not realized that, in the human triangle, two of the sides discover a congeniality and attraction that is denied to the third. The ordered routine of her life had seemed to her as stable as the Pyramids, and when Agnes's mother, a vague, bland, inconsequent woman, had, upon starting for Egypt, suggested that she leave her daughter in her old friend's charge, Eileen had welcomed the idea of having a young girl about the house. She had considered it charming, and now that gay, indifferent presence which had blown into her and Don's life like a thistledown, and, in her estimation, had occupied about as much space there, threatened to demolish the solid structure of her happiness as a child blows upon a house of cards and scatters it.

It seemed to Eileen that she stared back at herself, the self of a few weeks before, in wonder. And then that cold shiver at her heart returned and stayed. In this dim spot, with the sodden smell of dying leaves in her nostrils, it was not strange that she should feel as if she were beset by a thousand intangible dangers. Not only the security of her outer life was threatened but the still dearer security of her heart.

Was it, then, all—all on the side of youth? The very soul of her rose in revolt, and yet she trembled, fearing the futility of that rebellion. She caught at the thought of her own dark beauty, still praised, still admired; but even so, a picture of spring rose before her, the ripple of brooks, the flickering of young leaves, the first, frail flower pushing up above the moist, fragrant earth, with its fugitive, almost pathetic appeal. Again there was a moment of chaos and then an almost intense consciousness of her heart's virility, her determination to claim and hold her own against everything. A surge of resentment, of hatred against the girl, was like a tidal wave almost engulfing her.

"Eileen! Eileen!"

Why, that was Don calling her.

"I'm here," she called back, "in the chrysanthemum garden."

"It's getting late," he said; his voice was impatient. "What are you doing out so long? I want to close the house."

"I didn't realize how the time was pass-

ing. I wanted a breath of air. Come and walk up and down a bit. It's wonderfully mild for this time of the year." She caught his arm and turned in the path again. "What have you been doing since I left?"

"Oh, nothing," he answered; "chaffing Agnes."

Eileen was an impetuous woman with a longing to get things straight and settled as quickly as possible.

"Look here, Don," she said. "Don't you think you show too much attention to that child?"

She felt him stiffen. He made a movement as if to draw away his arm.

"Oh, I know," she hastened to say, struggling now to be diplomatic. "It amuses you to draw her out, and it's all perfectly harmless and all that, but you really ought to consider its effect on her."

"Its effect on her?" he repeated disgustedly. "What effect on her?" He pitched his cigar angrily along the path in front of him. It fell a little to one side and lay there, its glowing tip burning against the blackness of the night. "I've never heard of anything more far-fetched. The girl's a mere child; and just because she's unconscious and unsophisticated enough to chaff me as if I were a schoolboy, and ingenuous enough to make a confidant of me, why, you've got to come in with a lot of silly, prudish ideas and try to spoil it all."

He drew himself up and shook his head as if her attitude were incomprehensible to him. Eileen had a mental picture of his expression which was as distinct as if she were looking at him in a broad light. It was a little disgusted, a little shocked and annoyed, a little self-consciously virtuous.

She was realizing her mistake; but she blundered on, endeavoring to build up her case by further arguments.

"You have not only yourself to think of—but Agnes, also," she went on. "Young girls get peculiar fancies. It wouldn't be the first time that a girl of eighteen lost her head about a middle-aged man."

"Oh, my grandfather's wig!" He stopped short in the path and took her by the shoulders. "Eileen, are you quite well? I don't know what to think—I can't understand this entirely new streak in you. It's beyond me. To put it plainly, it sounds crazy. I'll pay you the compliment of saying that it's not in the least like you. I guess the kindest interpretation to put on the

whole matter is that you've been overtaxing yourself lately and are a bit nervous. And now I think, considering everything and the lateness of the hour, that the best thing you can do is to go to bed. Come!"

Miserably she saw that she had put herself in just the position she might have anticipated if she had taken time to think—the victim of a fantastic hallucination, holding the small, spiteful resentment of a fading woman toward a younger, fresher one. It wounded her dignity that she should be considered capable of this, and she struggled foolishly to vindicate the reasonableness of her attitude.

"Don," she cried, her footsteps lagging behind his, "I'm not a fool about this matter, and I'm not going to be put in the position of one, although I realize that, by speaking of it at all, I've made it easy for you to adopt your present tone and manner. I've put myself in a foolish position; but, nevertheless, you're wrong. You can keep up all the pleasant fictions you want about her innocence and ingenuousness and your purely paternal interest in her and her purely daughterly interest in you, but Agnes is not so ingenuous as you think. Oh," interrupting his indignant protest, "I'm not saying anything against her; no young girl is."

"Oh, you women! You are all alike, and I thought you were different, Eileen. Getting down to bed-rock, what does all this nonsense mean? Simply that you are jealous—a case of plain, petty jealousy." They had reached the house by this time, and now he lowered his voice and spoke with a very definite authority. "And I'll tell you one thing: We are going to waste no more time in such discussions, and just one more remark: If you would only learn to let other people mind their own business and not attempt to rule the universe on a plan of your own, I think that you might find the world a better and happier place and that you would get along better."

"A typically masculine rebuke," reflected Eileen, as, without replying, she passed through the door he held open, a faint, bitter smile about her lips.

It still lingered there as she undressed for the night.

No wonder, she told herself, she was tasting the dust and ashes of futility. She had meddled in a situation that demanded hands off and had further complicated

things. With that impelling desire for action which was a part of her temperament, it had appeared to her that something ought to be done, and she had done the one thing that occurred to her. It was impossible to speak to the girl. At the moment, she had seen no way but to discuss the matter with Donald, and she had got just what she might have expected. She had been accused of jealousy, of cattish femininity, of profaning a happy, entirely innocent friendship. What nonsense! Were there any friendships between men and women which in all their potentialities were entirely innocent?

And romance, that vague, shimmering thing of "music and moonlight and feeling?" Did that, too, like everything else, belong exclusively to youth? She clutched her hands over her heart. That warm, full beat seemed to assure her that romance, like love, was eternal, ageless, no matter of time. It was a part of the heart's unchanging youth. One's conceptions of it varied, altered, expanded, but the thing itself remained inviolate. Out in those shadowy paths to-night, if Donald had walked with her there in love, would not the garden have bloomed for her into such warmth and color as sunlight and morning can never give?

But he had not walked with her in love. For him, it had been the monotonous desert, and he had seen beckoning, alluring him, the mirage of youth.

If one may judge by the events of the next fortnight, Eileen had been right in fearing that she had precipitated just the situation she had tried so passionately to avoid; for, after their conversation of that evening, Donald wasted no time in making a declaration of independence that amounted to open war, and carried out his campaign ostentatiously before her eyes. He began by giving himself a fling, an obvious one, like a challenge cast in her teeth.

He began it by coming out early in the afternoons to dance at the country club, but that merely seemed to whet his appetite for the lighter diversions. He insisted upon taking Eileen and Agnes into town in the evenings to restaurant dinners, chosen with particular regard to the tastes of a young girl, and afterward to the opera or to see a play. And Eileen felt herself relegated, whether she would or not, to the position of chaperon. She made everything there was to make of the part, dressed it with splendid

subtlety, so that, to the passing observer, she was the central figure, catching and holding the eye, and she carried it off with a desperate sparkle and vivacity which went unrecognized and which no one applauded.

There were early morning rides, too, in which she took no part, and Agnes would appear at breakfast excited and wind-blown, bubbling with inconsequent laughter and enthusiastic accounts of some mad gallop, but Eileen saw, with that incredibly quickened sight which missed no change of expression on either face, that if Cameron spoke to the girl suddenly, her breath would flutter at her lips and the color would momentarily leave her face.

But presently, and apparently without cause, Cameron's desire for change and movement seemed to flicker out in a way that was puzzlingly incomprehensible to Eileen and woundingly incomprehensible to Agnes. He made no explanations; indeed his attitude proclaimed the fact that it would be rash to venture the topic to him, but he looked bored, a trifle fagged, and, if not exactly irritable, at least masculinely morose.

This for a few days and then, one evening, Eileen, who had gone to her room soon after dinner in the attempt to ward off a headache, looked up from a rather absorbing book to see that by her clock the hour was late, and, with a little shock, she realized that she did not remember hearing either Cameron or Agnes come up-stairs.

She stepped out into the hall and down the stairs until she came to the first landing. There was a sharp turn there, commanding a view of the lower hall, and just as Eileen reached it, she saw Agnes waver toward Cameron, who was standing by the mantelpiece, and in another moment she was in his arms.

Perhaps there was an exclamation. Eileen never knew whether she spoke or not, but Agnes lifted her head and saw her, a white shape in her long, silk wrapper halting there on the shadowy landing. For one horrified moment the girl looked up at her, and then she pushed Cameron away and stumbled blindly toward the stairs.

But Eileen had already hastened to her room and locked her door. She had only one thought and that was to be alone. She was trembling from head to foot; gusts of passion shook her like a leaf—cold gusts.

Hours or minutes passed—she couldn't



It wasn't intentional. It never happened before—oh—

"You can't say or do anything," said Eileen, at last. "There is nothing for you to do but to go."

"Oh!" Agnes crumpled up in a chair, the nearest chair. "To—go—" she repeated dazedly, as if the idea had never struck her before.

"Yes; you will have to go to some other of your mother's friends. You have others to whom you can go, of course?"

"Oh, quantities," with a break in her voice. "But what will mother think? Oh, you won't tell her, you won't? I couldn't bear that. I know you can't help hating me, but I didn't know—I never thought—"

"The old, old excuses," said Eileen bitterly;

"but there's no use of our arguing or discussing anything. It's too late for that. All there is for you to do is to go at once."

The girl seemed scarcely to have heard her. "Go," she whispered. "Then—but what will he say—what will he think?"

It was then that Eileen stood tall and white above her. "And you dare say that to me? 'He say!'" she echoed scornfully. "It is what I say, now. You think he loves you—my husband loves you! Why, if I invited another young girl into the house, he'd forget you in a week."

"I don't believe it," cried Agnes, stung to fire at last. "Oh, I don't care if it was wicked; I don't care for anything but him, and I don't care if you do know it!"

"You—" Eileen's hands clenched, the color showed for the first time on her cheeks. "Oh, you little fool!" A wave of hopeless-

"You're making fun of me," pouted Agnes, "and you're trying to get me to reveal my heart's secrets; but I shan't"

tell, but at last there came the sound of knocking, cautiously low and yet persistent and almost frantic, and Agnes's voice muffled, whispering, imploring her to let her in.

For a time Eileen sat looking at the door, listening to that low knocking, that broken pleading and, at last, she rose and turned the key, unlocking it. Agnes came in. Her face was swollen, blotched with tears, distorted with fear.

"You—you are cruel to let me wait so long," she gasped. "You must see me; you must. I haven't anyone but you—I'm not wicked—I don't know what to do."

Eileen was formidable—very deadly still, very white, with dark hair framing a set, cold face; eyes alert, but inscrutable, something terrifying in them.

"Oh, don't look at me that way!" cried the girl. "What can I say; what can I do?"

ness came over her as she looked down at this crushed yet defiant creature, with all the childish prettiness washed out of her tear-stained face. How could they two talk together; on what ground could they meet? How should experience argue with the utter lack of it? The girl dreaming that she could make any permanent impression on a man like Donald, whose habits of thought and custom were long fixed—there was no danger of that. The danger lay in the temporary impression, his susceptibility to it. It was there that this slight girl could be a destructive force in their lives.

Eileen knew that if she gave way to her inclinations, she would turn the girl out now, but she would gain nothing by that, and a hope came to her that, maybe by trying to take a calm view of the matter, she could make this girl understand, understand that, by following blindly the impulses of this first passion, she was in the way to wreck not only other lives but her own also.

"Agnes, if I could make you realize what you are doing—" It was a bitter cry from Eileen's very soul. "You ought to be made to understand; I'm going to try to tell you."

"You—you—hate me," sobbed Agnes.

"I'm trying not to—I'm trying to put all that away from me, just as I want to put away all concealments between us and make you see things as they are. Listen: I know what you are thinking in your heart of hearts. Perhaps you wouldn't acknowledge it, but you believe that if I would get a divorce and let you marry him, that that would solve the whole problem and that you would be happy."

Agnes started and gave an inarticulate murmur.

"Your life is unlivable." Eileen ignored the interruption. "You have had no experience, no responsibilities. There is only one thing in it to you and that is your—your infatuation for him; you think that that is true of him, too, but it's not. Your life is young and empty, but his has been lived a long time and is full, full of many things. You don't understand that our lives—his and mine—are more or less one. Marriage! That can't be broken as easily as you think. You can't understand that, either, and I can't explain—no one can. You can't theorize about marriage or sentimentalize over it; you've got to live it, and then it's only your individual problem. Then there are other ties, household interests, business in-

terests, the social connections of years, the present and future of our two boys, a thousand things in our lives that would hold him."

Agnes was alive at last; she quivered and trembled, no longer crushed and abased. She lifted her head as if a vital current flowed through her veins.

"It doesn't make any difference what you say," her voice was strong enough now. "You can't help my loving him. No one can. I'm going now. I'm going right away as soon as I can get word to some people and get my trunks packed—and that's all you can ask."

Then it had all failed, all of her diplomacy, all her self-control, all of her desperate and resolute suppression of primitive impulse. She had made no more impression on this girl than if she had talked to the wind—this girl who was facing her, now, with flaming cheeks and defiant eyes. Eileen knew a cold sinking of the heart. Then it was all—all on the side of youth.

"I want to ask you something," she said quietly. "Did he—my husband—see me when I was on the stairs?"

Agnes shook her head.

"I saw you," she said, "but he did not turn around." She had spoken as she moved toward the door, and now she slipped through it, closing it behind her.

Eileen stood thinking. Again she had spoken and spoken quite uselessly, just as uselessly as on the night in the garden when she had remonstrated with Donald. And, now, what was left her? Nothing but to sit by and watch fate play the game out to the end, watch the cards as they fell, whether for or against her. Did she have the nerve to do it? All night she tossed on her bed or walked the floor trying to convince herself that this was the only course, but it was morning before she felt that, under any circumstances, she would abide by this decision.

She breakfasted in her room and decided to remain there for the rest of the day. She felt languid, apathetic, utterly exhausted after the events of the night before. She opened the windows, drew the shades, and then lay down on a couch, endeavoring to make herself as comfortable as possible and wishing that she might sleep. She had but one hope—that Agnes would not attempt to intrude on her again before she left. She took it for granted that Cameron had left

the house and gone to town. Therefore, it was all the greater surprise to her when, about eleven o'clock, there came a knock upon the door—his knock.

She sat up on the couch on which she was lying, in surprise.

"I supposed you had gone to town hours ago."

"No," he said; "I didn't go in this morning. The truth is I wanted to talk to you about something. How's your head? Any better than it was last night?"

"Not much," she answered faintly. Oh, what was he going to say? She felt as if she would snap, as if she had stood all endurable emotional strain.

"Well, I won't bother you long."

He sat beside her and looked down at her with his particularly attractive smile. It was whimsically repentant and still held in it something so boyish that, in spite of herself, she was stirred involuntarily to a maternal impulse of forgiveness.

"You haven't been nice to me lately," he went on, "and I want to make up." He

tried to take her hand, but she drew it away from him. "I dare say I was curt in the garden the other night, but you entirely misinterpreted my attitude. A man's never too old to—well, not exactly flirt with a pretty girl but to take an interest in her; and I don't want to be relegated to the grandpa class just yet, and—oh well!—the gist of it is that your young *protégée* is rather getting on my nerves. I've got several important business matters on now and all that, and when I come home I want some peace and quiet. I wish you'd try to make this clear to her," coaxingly. "Women know how to do those things."

She hardened her heart. She had suffered too

much to forget it all in a minute under the influence of Donald's caressing manner. Impulsively she made



"You haven't been nice to me lately," he went on. "and I want to make up." He tried to take her hand, but she drew it away from him

a gesture as if passionately disclaiming any interference. He appeared either not to notice it or to attach no especial significance to it.

"I thought she was an awfully nice, intelligent girl, and I was anxious to make her stay with us pleasant, but," his tone becoming more aggrieved, "she's got a sort of devilish restlessness, always wants to be doing something, like chasing about the country on horseback at breakneck speed before breakfast. It's not in the least a matter of years, but I never could, even when I was a boy, do all kind of stunts on an empty stomach. It's a lifelong idiosyncrasy. These before-breakfast rides have given me a wretched indigestion, getting worse all the time, too."

Eileen looked at him, still frowning, and then she felt a desire to burst into wild, hysterical laughter. The whole tragedy of the last few weeks was suddenly turned to bathos. His indigestion! And, oh, it was her heart!

"And then this everlasting dancing," he went on morosely. "It's all right. I enjoy it thoroughly. I always did like to dance, but I hate to do things over and over again like a horse in a treadmill, and I'm hanged if I will. I like to do things when the mood is on me and not senselessly to keep them up because everyone else is doing them. I've had a touch of sciatica in my leg lately, which doesn't make dancing any too pleasant a matter, I can tell you."

Eileen felt a new, quick flare of resentment as some deep, inherent sex-loyalty asserted itself. Poor little girl! Oh, poor little girl who was wasting her heart so foolishly and uselessly—missing the love of youth for youth, that apple-blossom time of romance, which should have been hers by inalienable right!

"And then—" Cameron's face reddened, as he was about to continue his confidences. "But," hastily thinking better of it, "there's no use going into that. When is her mother coming back?"

"Not until quite late in the spring."

"I thought so. There's your modern woman for you," disgustedly. "Got the responsibility of a young daughter, and chases off and shakes it."

Eileen said nothing. She was thinking that neither she nor Agnes had won. It was the triumph of the accustomed. Not love but habit had held him. Youth had bewitched him for a moment with its lovely

enchantments, but she had upset his daily routine—an unpardonable sin. He had lost the power of adjustment. And she, Eileen, had not counted at all; but that, she reflected, was an extreme statement. She was, no doubt, to him an integral part of this dear, familiar round, the pervasive influence of it. She liked to think that. Not much basis for romance, or romance as the girl would look at it, but this attitude of his which would have caused a younger woman to suffer horribly, had not been disillusioning to her. She liked, she understood him just as he was. She would not have had him different, and the ordered security of her life—the dearer security of her heart—was intact.

There was the sound of a motor on the drive beneath the windows.

"What's that?" asked Cameron. "Some one coming or going?"

A moment later a maid brought in a note.

MY DEAR MRS. CAMERON:

I am leaving rather suddenly. I have just had a telegram from Molly Westlake, and she and her mother urge me to spend the rest of the winter with them at Aiken. They wish me to come at once and so I have left rather unceremoniously. With many thanks for the kindness you and Mr. Cameron have shown me,

I am, sincerely yours,
AGNES COLLINGWOOD.

"I rather fancy that this is more for you than for me." Eileen permitted herself that, as she handed to him the note.

He read it and his face clouded.

"I wonder—" he said, and thought a minute. "Why you don't suppose she really—" He stopped suddenly.

In the evening, Mrs. Cameron walked again in the chrysanthemum garden. It was one of those soft, mild days of Indian summer. Not long had she strolled up and down the paths when she saw Donald's cigar glimmering across the lawn. He joined her and they walked up and down together. He drew her arm through his.

"You're the only woman in the world, Eileen."

Who said that romance belonged to but one period of life? The shadowy garden bloomed with color and perfume.

"It isn't all on the side of youth, is it?" she said involuntarily.

"I should say not," he answered emphatically. "We've proved that."

"Yes, we—but what of the girl?" The question rose to her lips but was not voiced.

The Auction Block

A STORY OF STAGE LIFE AND A YOUNG GIRL'S SACRIFICE

By Rex Beach

Author of "The Spoilers," "The Ne'er-do-Well," "Rope's End," etc.

Illustrated by Charles Dana Gibson

SYNOPSIS—The removal of the Knight family from Vale to New York City, after Peter's defeat in local politics, is necessary in order that he may accept a minor clerkship in a city department, but is desired by Mrs. Knight and the good-for-nothing son, Jim, chiefly as an opportunity for the advancement of the beautiful daughter, Lorelei, who, they imagine, can go on the stage and easily make a rich marriage. Before long, Lorelei finds herself burdened with the entire support of the family, since the father is crippled by an accident and the brother will not work. The girl's beauty has attracted attention in the chorus, and at the end of two years, having been promoted to a small speaking part in one of Bergman's Revues, she is interviewed by Campbell Pope, a critic, as one of the reigning theatrical favorites. Through her dressing-roommate, Lilas Lynn, Lorelei makes acquaintances among men powerful in the steel industry. These include Jarvis Hammon, who is befriending Lilas; John T. Merkle, a cynical and dyspeptic bachelor, but a man of high moral principles; Hannibal Wharton, and his dissipated son, Bob. She resents the latter's attentions, but this does not prevent his turning up constantly at the theater and annoying her with invitations to supper. The girl finds a real woman friend in Adorée Demorest, whose unenviable reputation has been manufactured for exploitation on the vaudeville stage. Adorée is really a good-hearted, simple-natured woman.

Hammon's infatuation for Lilas threatens the steel man's business interests as well as his home, and Lorelei goes to Merkle when she learns that a plot is being hatched against Hammon with which Max Melcher, a friend of Lilas and a power in the underworld life of Broadway, is connected. To her distress, Lorelei discovers that her brother is an associate of Melcher. By mere accident, Lorelei and Merkle appear at a motoring-resort, one night, just as a flash-light photograph has been taken of Hammon and Lilas together at supper. The magnate is sure the occurrence will lead to blackmail or worse. In fact, Lilas is looking forward to a day of reckoning with Hammon. She wishes to avenge the death of her father, sacrificed to the god of greed in a steel-mill where Hammon, before his rise to wealth, was foreman.

Merkle and Lorelei figure in the story as it appears in certain newspapers. Melcher starts action against Hammon on the ground that Lilas is his wife, and the magnate promptly settles. His own wife begins divorce proceedings. Jim Knight and his mother call on Merkle and ask for money—or marriage with Lorelei. This act determines Lorelei to leave home, and she takes a modest apartment in the house in which Hammon has established Lilas amid luxurious surroundings. After the publication of the newspaper story, Lorelei finds a distinct change in the attitude of her associates toward her. On one occasion, young Wharton renders her a service in rescuing her from the unwelcome advances of Bergman, her manager. Her estimate of her admirer rises, and he seems to be not entirely bad.

Jim Knight and Melcher now plot to marry Lorelei to Bob Wharton. A supper-party, consisting of Lorelei, Lilas, Jim, and Bob, is arranged, and after Wharton is somewhat under the influence of liquor, Jim suddenly announces that he has asked Lorelei to marry him. Bob declares this to be so, and finally overcomes the girl's objections. The four proceed immediately to Hoboken, where the ceremony is performed by a justice of the peace. They return to Lilas' apartment to celebrate, when Hammon unexpectedly appears. He is furious with Lilas for her part in the marriage of his friend's son with what he calls a blackmailer. Lilas continues the quarrel, reveals herself as her father's avenger, and finally shoots Hammon. There were no witnesses, Jim and Bob having disappeared into Lorelei's apartment, while Lorelei remains in another room. Lorelei phones for Merkle, and he and Bob succeed in getting the wounded man to his home without notice. Bob bribing a cabby and taking his place on the box. Hammon insists that he shot himself accidentally. Preparations are made for Lilas to sail for Europe that very day.

The joy of Mrs. Knight and her husband when they hear of Lorelei's marriage may be imagined. The mother hastens to the bride's apartment, and is overcome with astonishment when Lorelei says that she is sorry, because Bob had been drinking and did not know what he was doing. "I ought to be hanged," she says. With Lilas gone, she declares, in spite of her mother's protests, that she cannot leave the theater immediately, and this resolution would seem to be wise when Bob returns home that afternoon. His account at the bank is overdrawn, but he says that he has made a draft, as usual, on his father.

Mr. Wharton, summoned to New York by the shooting of Hammon, arrives just before the latter's death and learns of his son's marriage. Then, as soon as possible, he calls on his son and denounces Lorelei and her family as blackmailers who have trapped the boy, and offers to buy his release. A violent scene follows, in which Bob takes his wife's part, and the father threatens to cut off his allowance if he sticks to her. The next day, Wharton informs Mrs. Knight of his threat over the phone, and she and Jim hasten in alarm to Lorelei's apartment.

ON the way to the Elegancia, Mrs. Knight recounted in greater detail, and with numerous digressions and comments, what Hannibal Wharton had said to her. Not only had he given full vent to his anger at the marriage, but he had allowed himself the pleasure of expressing a frank opinion of the entire Knight family in all its unmitigated

and complete badness. Mrs. Knight herself he had called a bloodsucker, it seemed—the good woman shook with rage at the memory—and he had threatened her with the direst retribution if she persisted in attempting to fasten herself upon him. Bob, he had explained, was a loafer whom he had supported out of a sense of duty. If the idiot was ungrateful, he would simply have to suffer the consequences. But Bob's

mother felt the disgrace keenly, and, on her account, Hannibal had expressed himself as willing to ransom the young fool for, say, ten thousand dollars!

"Disgrace, eh? Ten thousand dollars!" Jim growled. "What does he think we are, anyhow? Why, that ain't cigarette-money!"

"I never was so insulted in my life," stormed Mrs. Knight. "You should have heard him!"

With a show of confidence not entirely real, Jim rejoined: "Now, ma, don't heat up. Everybody forgets me, but I'm going to draw cards in this game."

The interview that followed their arrival at Lorelei's home was far from pleasant, for Mrs. Knight was still too indignant to leave the discussion in Jim's more capable hands, and Lorelei, wishing Bob to cherish no illusions, allowed her relatives to make a complete and distressing exhibition of their greed. At his first opportunity, Bob explained rather briefly, "I offered Lorelei her freedom, last night, when my income was amputated."

"You've had time to think it over," his wife interposed. "Do you still want me?"

"Why, of course. And you?"

She shrugged.

"I don't change in one night. Now—I wish you and Jim would leave mother and me—"

Bob acquiesced, glad to escape even in company with his redoubtable brother-in-law. When he and Jim had gone, Mrs. Knight addressed Lorelei with motherly candor.

"He's a pleasant fellow, of course, and he's crazy about you, but don't let's be sentimental. If there's no chance to make it up with his family, we must get out of this mess and save what we can."

"Was Mr. Wharton very angry?"

"Was he?" Mrs. Knight rolled her eyes in mingled rage and despair. "I'm positively sick over the things he said. Everybody seems to be against us, and—I'm almost ready to give up. But at least you saved your good name—it was a marriage, not a scandal. We have that to be thankful for." She followed this outburst of optimism with another. "You can keep the name and go into vaudeville. The publicity will help you, and that old crank will surely stretch his offer to keep

his name off the bill-boards. Of course we won't get anything like what we expected, but we'll get something. Fifteen or twenty thousand is better than—" Noting the shadow of a smile upon her daughter's lips, she checked her rush of words. "You don't seem to care what—"

"I don't."

Mrs. Knight's face twisted into an expression of pained incredulity. "Surely you don't mean to live with Bob?" she gasped. "Not—now."

"I do mean to."

The mother's lips parted, closed, parted again; she seemed to taste something unspeakably bitter. She groped for words to fit her state of mind, but words failed her. When she did speak, however, the weakness of her vocabulary was offset by the shrill tone of her surprise. "My dear! Why, my dear! He hasn't a cent. Of course you're quite confused now—you've been through a lot and you think he's the only man in the world—but it's impossible. It's absurd. The marriage was only a form. You're no more his wife in the sight of God than —"

"Let's not talk about God," cried Lorelei. "That ceremony was scarcely legal, not to speak of religion or decency."

"You've lost your mind. You've changed completely."

"Yes, I have. You see, I wasn't a wife until yesterday—until Bob and I had an understanding; but I *am* a wife now, and I suppose I'll never be a girl again. I've begun to think for myself, mother; I've begun to understand. I've had a suspicion that my old ideas were wrong, and they were."

"Fiddle-de-dee! You're hysterical. You can't make me believe you learned to love that man."

"I don't say I love him."

Mrs. Knight snorted her triumph loudly.

"Then you mustn't live with him another moment. My dear child, such a relationship is—well, think it out for yourself."

Lorelei saw the futility of argument, but certain thoughts demanded expression and she voiced them, as much for her own sake as for her mother's. "It's too late to talk about that kind of honor. But there's another kind. When I married Bob, I sold myself; and all of us—I mean the family—knew that what I sold was

counterfeit. He thought he was getting something more than my body, but we knew he wasn't—and now that we find we took bad money for a worthless article, how can we pretend to be swindled? When people try to cheat and get cheated themselves, what do they do? If they're game, they smile and take their medicine, don't they?"

It was plain that this form of logic impressed the listener not at all. Lorelei continued:

"I've learned that marriage is more than I considered it, mother. It's an obligation. I intend to live up to my part just as long as Bob lives up to his. If he complained of the fraud we practised on him, I'd be willing to leave him; but he doesn't—so the matter is out of our hands."

Mrs. Knight relieved her steadily increasing anger by a harsh outburst.

"I never thought you could be so silly, after the way you were raised. You talk about obligations—what about your obligations to your parents? Didn't we give up everything for you? Didn't Peter sacrifice his life's work to give you an opportunity?"

"I'll keep on sharing my salary with you."

"Salary!" Mrs. Knight spat out the word. "After all our plans! Salary! My God!"

"You're probably just as honest in your ideas as I am in mine," Lorelei told her. "I shan't allow you to want for—"

"I should hope not, since you're to blame for Peter's condition— Oh, you know you are! If you hadn't wanted a career, he'd still be in Vale, a strong, healthy man instead of a cripple."

"I didn't want a career," Lorelei denied with heat. "And father almost *had* to leave Vale."

"Nothing of the sort. He was a big man there. 'Had to leave Vale', eh? So you've turned against your own blood and disparage your father— Anyhow, he was hurt while he was working to give you a start, and now he's helpless. Who waits on him? I do. If I believed in prayers, I'd pray that you may never have a child to disappoint you as you've disappointed him and me."

Her voice quavered and she tried for pathos, but her fury was still too fresh to be entirely restrained, and it scalded her like vitriol. "If Bob Wharton was

half a man, he'd step aside; but of course he won't until he's had enough of your beauty. That's all he wants—your beauty—and you'll be fool enough to let him have it *for nothing*. I'm sure I wish you joy with the selfish wretch and with your new-fangled ideas of wifely devotion. This will kill Peter. You'll have his death on your conscience. Think that over, now that you're so fond of thinking. Ten thousand dollars right now would save his life. Think that over, too, when your own father is dead and gone."

White with anger, sick with disappointment, Mrs. Knight whisked herself out of the apartment.

Bob returned in excellent spirits—nothing had power permanently to dampen his cheerfulness—and seizing Lorelei's hand he slipped a diamond ring upon her third finger, then a plain gold band over that.

"Now we're legally wrapped up in the same package and labeled 'Wed,'" he declared. "I've been terribly embarrassed."

"How did you manage to buy these?" Lorelei inquired, with some curiosity.

"I earned the money. Fact! It was a premium on abstinence. I met a friend; he invited me to drink; I refused; friend was stunned. Before he recovered, I ran through his pockets like a pet squirrel. It beats a mask and a lead pipe."

"We can't begin this way," she laughed. "I love pretty things, and this is your first gift"—she kissed the solitaire—"but please don't give me anything more for a while. I'm not going to lecture you, or wear a long face, or find fault—*ever*. We're going to wear smiles while our experiment lasts. To-morrow is Sunday. Will you take me somewhere?"

"Will I?" Bob cried in delight. "I'll hire a car and we'll motor up to Tuxedo. There's a dandy crowd out there. We'll take Adorée and the Immaculate Critic, and we'll have dinner at the club. Campbell can show the latest effects in negligées, and—"

"That's too expensive; let's all go to Coney Island."

"Coney? How do you get there?"

"I don't know. Will you go?"

"Certainly, if you want to! I dare say we'll meet some of the best steam-fitters in the city. We'll patronize everything

from the Mystic Maze to the Trained Fleas; we'll bump the bumps, and you'll throw your arms around me and scream, and we'll look at the incubator babies and blush. I can't wait."

Strangely enough, the news of Bob Wharton's marriage had not leaked into the papers up to this time, and Lorelei, having regard for the feelings of his parents, insisted that he help her to keep the matter secret as long as possible. Bob rebelled at first, for he adored publicity. He rejoiced in his newest exploit and desired his world to hear of it, while the prospect of further mortifying his father was so agreeable that it required much persuasion to make him relinquish it. With her own family Lorelei had less difficulty, for they were by no means eager to advertise their bad bargain and had withdrawn behind a stiff restraint, leaving the couple to their own devices. This attitude spared the bride much unpleasant notoriety, enabling her to pursue her work at the theater without comment.

Bob's society proved in some ways a welcome change from the sordid drabness of her own relatives, for he was colorful, versatile, and nearly always good-humored. He kept Lorelei entertained, at least, and it at times he provoked her, it was only as a mischievous boy tries the patience of a parent. He was weirdly prankish; serious happenings reacted strangely upon him. Misfortune aroused in him a wild hilarity; cares excited mirth. He bore his responsibilities lightly and displayed them to his friends with the same profound pride with which a small boy exhibits a collection of beetles, but they meant nothing more.

Lorelei realized, before long, that this very jocundity of his, since it fed upon constant change and excitement, constituted the gravest menace to their happiness. The man lived entirely outside of himself; he utterly lacked the power of self-amusement, and although he seemed content when she was near, during the long hours of her absence he was like a fretful child. He refused to frequent the theater, ostensibly because of their secret, in reality because of his shame at allowing her to work. As Lorelei came to know him better and to understand the conflicting forces within him, she began to wonder how long he could hold himself true to his bargain.

During the first week of their married life, his system struggled to throw off the effects of his recent dissipations, and in consequence it craved only rest. Greatly encouraged by this lack of desire, he boasted that the battle was already won, and Lorelei pretended to agree with him.

She did not deceive herself, however, and a brief experience convinced her that to be merely a wife to one of Bob's vagrant disposition was not enough; that, in order to keep his new self alive, she must also be his sweetheart, his chum, and his partner. If she failed in any one of these rôles, disaster was bound to follow. But to succeed in them all, when there was no love to strengthen her, was by no means easy. Always she felt a great emptiness, and a disappointment that her life had been so crookedly fashioned. Sometimes she even felt degraded, and wondered if she were doing right, after all. Reason argued that to live with a man she did not love was immoral, and the mere fact that she and Bob were legally married gave her no comfort whatever. There had been nothing sacred in their union; she supposed that the courts would dissolve it if the truth became known.

More than once Lorelei had spurned offers far more profitable and no less holy than that existing between her and Bob, and it seemed to her, now, that the difference between mistress and wife must lie in something besides the mutterings of a sleepy Hoboken court-officer. Just where the line of demarcation lay, however, or upon which side of that line she stood, she could not determine.

In the course of a fortnight, Bob began to grow restless. One evening, when he came for her, she saw that he was nervous; a strained, tired look had crept into his eyes, and she thought she understood. Nevertheless, his spirits were ebullient. When they reached home he ushered her into the apartment with a flourish, and Lorelei was amazed to find their table set with strange linen, silver, and china, and the dining-room decorated as if for a party.

"Who's coming? What on earth!" she exclaimed.

"A little surprise. A supper for just you and me, my dear."

Two strangers, evidently caterer's men, were completing the final preparations for an extravagant banquet. Noting a collec-

tion of wine-glasses at each place, Lorelei glanced at Bob reproachfully, but he only laughed, saying:

"Take heart. The liquid diet is all a bluff. Kindly note the centerpiece."

She saw that the center of the table was occupied by a highly decorated silver wine-cooler.

"There it sits," Bob exclaimed, "the little Temple of Bacchus—overgrown with roses. It used to be my shrine and my confessional until I saw the light. Now that I've escaped from the bondage of sin, sickness, and error, I'm giving a triumphal feast upon the altar-steps."

It was one of his whims. During the meal he made elaborate speeches in the names of his friends. His imaginary guests congratulated him; in empty glasses they toasted the bride; they extolled her beauty; they praised his own gallantry, and vaunted his conquest of the demon Rum. As the supper progressed, Bob simulated a growing intoxication, while the hired servants looked on as if at the antics of a lunatic. He made it amusing, and Lorelei entered into the spirit of the make-believe.

But when they were alone and all traces of the feast had disappeared, he swooped down out of the clouds and confessed miserably:

"I thought I could kid myself, but I can't. I want a drink. *I—want—a—drink!* God, how I want it!"

Lorelei went swiftly to him.

"The fight is just beginning, Bob; you're doing nobly."

"It isn't thirst," he explained, and she saw that same strained uneasiness in his bright eyes. "I'm not *thirsty*; I'm *shaky* inside. My ego is wobbling on its pins, and I'm rattling to pieces. I manage well enough when you're around, but when I'm alone, I—remember." She felt him twitch and shiver nervously. "And there are so many places to get booze! Everywhere I look I see a bartender with arms outstretched. When I grit my teeth the damned appetite leaves me alone, but when I'm off my guard it gum-shoes in again. I get tired of fighting."

Lorelei nodded sympathetically.

"That's why it's so hard to reform; one's conscience tires, but temptation is always fresh."

"It's not thirst," Bob repeated. "My soul is dried out. I get to thinking, late at night. I'm afraid I'm going to quit."

"You must keep busy."

"I'm going to work."

"No, no! Not yet!" she cried quickly.

"You must fight it out where I can help."

Bob smiled gratefully.

"You're a thoroughbred. I promised to let you have your way, and you shall. Even if we lose the patient, it will be a dandy operation."

Beginning with the next morning, Lorelei inaugurated a change in the domestic routine. Every day thereafter, she and Bob took a long walk. He rebelled, of course, as soon as the novelty wore off, for he detested walking. So did she, for that matter, but she pretended to like it, and her simulated zest overcame his reluctance. They did not amble aimlessly about the streets; she led him on purposeful tramps that kept them in the open air most of the day, and although her feet blistered until she could hardly drag herself to the theater when night came, she persisted. In time, the walking grew to be a dreadful task; it took all her determination, but she would not give up.

With admirable craft she gradually won him away from the cafés, assuming delight in household duties that she was far from feeling. In reality she was a wretched cook, but she declared her intention of becoming an expert, and insisted upon preparing at least two of their daily meals, at which times she saw to it that Bob ate more sweets and more salt foods than he was accustomed to. The former took the place of alcohol; the latter roused a healthy thirst, and thirsty men drink water. These were only little things; her heaviest task lay in keeping his mind occupied. At times this was easy; again the effort wore her out. Bob began to have surly spells.

For the first time in her life Lorelei really worked, and worked not for herself but for another. Although the experience was interesting in its novelty, the result remained unsatisfactory, for not only did love fail to respond to these sacrifices but she could see no improvement in Bob's condition. The thing she fought was impalpable, yet enormous; it was weak, yet strong; it seemed to sleep, yet it was ever awake.

Of necessity the two lived in the closest intimacy, than which nothing is ordinarily more fatal to domestic happiness. But Bob was unique; he did not tire; he began



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

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The Auction Block

to rely upon Lorelei as a sick man leans upon his nurse, and to worship her as a man worships his sweetheart. There was more than passion in his endearments, now.

But it was discouraging to the girl, who gained no strength from her penance, and derived no satisfaction whatever in service for service's sake. The whole arrangement tried her patience desperately; she was weary in mind and body, and looked back with regret upon her former easy life. There was no time, now, for recreation—Bob had to be amused. Salary-day assumed a new importance, and she began to count the cost of every purchase.

Midsummer came. It was terribly hot in the city; the nights were breathless; the days were glaring, and this heat was especially trying to one in Bob's condition. In his periods of gaiety he showered his wife with attentions and squandered every dollar he could borrow in presents for her; in his hours of depression he was everything strange, morose, and irritable.

Without her knowledge he applied to his old firm for a salaried position and was refused.

He appealed to Merkle with the same result, but succeeded in borrowing a thousand dollars, with which he bought Lorelei a set of black opals, going into debt for half the price.

XX

LORELEI's family continued to smart under a sense of bitter injustice, but, although they kept aloof, they were by no means uninterested in her experiment. On the contrary, they watched it with derisive enjoyment, predicting certain failure. After Hannibal Wharton's insult, Jim was all for a prompt revenge, but he could not determine just how to use his dangerous knowledge to the best advantage. He considered the advisability of enlisting the aid of Max Melcher, but not liking the thought of dividing the loot, he decided provisionally to engineer a separation between Bob and Lorelei.

His desire to make mischief arose in only a slight degree from resentment—Jim's method of making a living had long since dulled the edge of feeling—it was merely the first step in a comprehensive scheme. With Bob and Lorelei estranged, a divorce would follow, and divorces were

profitable. A divorce, moreover, would open the way for a second inroad upon the Wharton wealth, for, with Lorelei's skirts clear, Jim could proceed with a larger scheme of extortion based on the Hammon murder.

One evening, after Lorelei had gone to the theater, Jim appeared at the apartment and found Bob in a mood so restless and irritable that he dared not go out.

"I had a hunch you were lonesome," the caller began, "so I came up to whittle and spit at the stove."

Now Jim could be agreeable when he chose; his parasitic life had developed in him a certain worldly good-fellowship; he was frankly unregenerate, and he had sufficient tact never to apologize or to explain. Therefore he kept Bob entertained.

A few nights later he returned with a fund of new stories, and during the evening he confessed to a consuming thirst.

"Death Valley has nothing on this place," he mourned.

Bob explained apologetically, "I'm sorry, but there's nothing in the house wetter than Croton water."

"I understand! Will you object if I sweeten a glass of it with some Scottish rites? I'm afraid of germs, and if water rots leather, think what it must do to the sensitive lining of a human stomach!" Jim drew a flask from his pocket, then hesitated as if in doubt.

"Don't mind me," Bob assured him hastily. "I'm strapped in the driver's seat."

But he looked on with eager appreciation as his brother-in-law filled a long glass and sipped it.

Bob had never been a whisky drinker, yet the faint odor of the liquor tantalized him. When, in the course of time, he saw Jim preparing a second drink, he stirred.

"Kind of itchy, eh? Let's whip across the street and have a game of pool," suggested Jim, and Bob was glad to escape from the room.

An agreeable hour followed, but Bob played badly, and found that his eye had lost its sureness. His hand was uncertain, too, and this lack of coordination disgusted him. He was sure that with a steadying drink he could beat Jim, and eventually he proved it, but, mindful of his resolution, he compromised on beer, which, Jim agreed, could not reasonably be called an intoxicant.

On his way to the theater Bob chewed cinnamon bark, and when he kissed Lorelei he held his breath.

This was the first of several pool matches, and after a while Bob was gratified to find that beer in moderation left no disagreeable effect whatever upon him. He rejoiced in his power of restraint.

There came a night when he failed to meet his wife. After waiting nearly half an hour, Lorelei went home, only to find the apartment deserted. She nibbled at a lonely lunch, trying to assure herself that nothing was seriously amiss, but she could not make up her mind to go to bed. She tried to read and failed. An hour passed, then another; a thousand apprehensions crowded in upon her, and she finally found herself walking the floor, but pulled herself together with a mirthless laugh. So, it had come, she reflected, with mingled bitterness and relief. Her fight was over; her part of the bargain was ended; she was free to live her own life as she chose. Certainly she had done her best, and above all question she was not the sort of wife who could wait patiently, night after night, for a drunken husband.

Bob, when he did arrive, entered with elaborate caution. He paused in the little hall, then tossed his hat into the living-room where his wife was waiting. After a moment his head came slowly into view, and he said,

"When the hat stays in, go in; when it comes out, beat it."

Lorelei saw that he was quite drunk.

"I just came from the theater," he explained, "but it was dark. Has the show failed, dearie?" He tried to kiss her, but she turned her face away. "Come! Must have my little kiss," he insisted; then, as she rose and moved away, leaving him swaying in his tracks, he began gravely to unroll an odd, thin package that resembled in shape a tennis-racket. Removing a soiled white wrapping, then an inner layer of oiled paper, he exposed the sad remains of what had been an elaborate bouquet of double English violets fringed with gardenias. He stared at the flowers in some bewilderment.

"Must have sat on 'em," he opined, at last; then he cried brightly: "Ha! Pressed flowers! I'm full of old-fashioned sentiment."

After studying Lorelei's unsmiling face, his tone altered.

"Oh, I know I slipped, but it couldn't be helped. Nature insisted, and I yielded gracefully; but—no harm done, none whatever. This isn't a defeat, my dear; it's a victory. I licked the demon Rum and proved myself a man of iron; I subjugated the cohorts of General Benjamin Boozie; then I signed a treaty of peace, and there was no bad blood on either side." After an uncomfortable pause, during which he vainly waited for her to speak, he explained more fully. "My dear, nothing is absolute. Life is a series of compromises. Have a heart. Would you rob the distiller of his livelihood? Think of the struggling young brewer with a family. Could you take the bread from the mouths of his little ones? The president of a bottling-works may be a Christian; he may have a sick wife. Remember the boys that work in the hop fields, and the joyous peasant girls of France. Moderation is the thing. Live and let live."

Lorelei nodded.

"Exactly! We shall live as we choose, only, of course, we can't live together after this." Then her disgust burst its control, and she demanded bitterly: "Haven't you any strength whatever? Haven't you any balance, Bob?"

He grinned at her cheerfully. "I should say I had. I walked a fence on the way home just to prove it, and I scarcely wobbled. Balance! Strength! Why, you ought to see Jim! They had to *carry* him."

"Jim? Was—Jim with you?"

"In spirit, yes; in body—only for a time. For a brief while we went gaily, hand in hand; then Jim lagged. He's a nice boy, but weak; he falters beneath a load—and as for pool! Why, I've slept on pool-tables so naturally I know the angles better than he. Ha! That's a funny line, isn't it? I know the angles of pool-tables because I've slept on 'em, see? Don't hurry; I'll wait for you. Even an 'act' like mine needs applause."

But Lorelei was in no laughing mood. She questioned Bob searchingly and soon learned of Jim's visits, of the flask, of the pool games. When she understood it all, her eyes were glowing but she found nothing to say. At last she got Bob to bed, then lay down beside him and stared into the darkness through many wakeful hours.

In the morning he was not only contrite but badly frightened; yet when he under-

took to make his peace, he found her unexpectedly mild.

"If you're sorry, that's all I ask," she said. "I changed my mind during the night."

"Never again!" he promised feelingly. "I thought I had cured myself."

Lorelei smiled at him faintly. "Cured! How long have you been a drinker?"

"Oh, nearly always!"

"When were you first drunk?"

"I was eighteen—I think."

"You've been undergoing a bodily change for ten years. During all that time your brain-cells have been changing their structure, and they'll never be healthy or normal until they've been made over. You can't accomplish that in a few weeks."

"Say, you don't mean I'm going to stay thirsty until my egg-shaped dome becomes round again?"

"Well, yes."

"Why, that might take years!"

"It took ten years to work the damage; it will probably take ten years to repair it."

Bob was aghast. "Good heavens! In ten years I'll be too old to drink—I'd tremble so that I'd spill it. But where did you get all this M. D. dope?"

"I've been reading. I've been talking to a doctor, too. You see, I wanted to help."

"Let's change doctors. Ten years! It can't be done."

"I'm afraid you're right. There's no such thing as reformation. A born criminal never reforms; only those who go wrong from weakness or from bad influences ever make good."

"Drinking isn't a crime," Bob declared angrily, "any more than freckles. It's just a form of diversion."

Lorelei shook her head. "If you're a born alcoholic you'll probably die a drunkard. I'm hoping that you didn't inherit the taste."

"Well, whether it was left to me or whether I bought it, I can't go dry for ten years."

"Then our bargain is ended."

He looked up sharply.

"Oh, no, it isn't!"

"Yes."

He extended a shaking hand, and his voice was supplicating as he said: "I can't get along without you, kid. You're a part of me—the vital part. I'd go to pieces quick if you quit now."

"When we made our agreement I meant to live up to every bit of it," Lorelei told him gently. "But we're going to try again, for this was Jim's fault."

"Jim? Jim was sorry for me. He tried to cheer—"

Lorelei's smile was bitter. "Jim was never sorry for anybody except himself. My family hate you just as your family hate me, and they'd like to separate us."

"Say! That's pretty rotten!" Bob exclaimed. "If he weren't your brother, I'd—"

Lorelei laughed mirthlessly. "Go ahead! I wish you would. It might clear the atmosphere."

"Then I will." After a moment he continued, "I suppose you feel you must go on supporting them?"

"Of course."

"Just as you feel you must support me. Is it entirely duty in my case?" Seeing her hesitate, he insisted, "Isn't there any love at all?"

"I'm afraid not, Bob."

The man pondered silently. "I suppose if I were the right sort," he said, at length, with some difficulty, "I'd let you go, under these circumstances. Well, I'm not the right sort; I'm not big or noble. I'm just an ordinary, medium-sized man, and I'm going to keep you. However, I'm through sidestepping. I've tried to outrun the Barleycorn brothers, but it's no use; so I'm going to turn and face them. If they lick me, I'll go under. But if I go under, I'll take you with me. I won't give you up! I won't!"

"I shan't let you pull me down," she told him soberly.

"Then you'll have to bear me up. When a man's drowning he grabs and holds on. That's me! There's nothing fine about me, understand? I'm human and selfish. I'd be happy in hell with you."

"You're not fair."

"I don't pretend to be. This isn't a bridge game; this is life. I'll cheat, I'll hold out, I'll deal from the bottom, if I can't win in any other way. Good God! Don't you understand that you're the only thing I ever loved—the only thing I ever wanted and couldn't get? I've never had but half of you; don't expect me to give that up."

He arose, jammed his hat upon his head as if to escape from the room, then turned

and crushed his wife to him with a fierce cruelty of possession. Lorelei could feel him shaking as he covered her face with kisses, but nothing within her stirred even faintly in answer to his passion.

When Bob reached the financial district that day and resumed his quest for work, he was ablaze with resentment at himself and at the world in general.

He took up the search with a dogged determination that was quite unlike him. One after another he canvassed his friends for a position and finally, as if ill fortune could not withstand his fervor, he was successful.

It was not much of a job that was offered him, but he snapped at it, and returned home that evening in the best of humor. Already the serious issues of the morning were but a memory; he burst in upon Lorelei like a gale, shouting,

"I'm chalk-boy at Crosset & Myers, so you can give Bergman your notice to-night."

"What's the salary?"

"It isn't a salary; it's a humiliation—twenty-five a week is the total insult."

"Why, Bob, that won't keep us and the family!"

"Damn the family!" He quieted himself with an effort. "Well, you give your notice, anyhow. I'll spear the coin for both establishments, somehow. Come; I insist! I want to be able to shave myself without blushing."

Lorelei's objections were not easily overcome, but at last, in view of the fact that the summer run of the Revue was drawing to a close and the show would soon take to the road, she allowed herself to be persuaded.

Throughout the next week, Bob Wharton really tried to make good. He was enthusiastic; the excitement of actual accomplishment was so novel that he had no time to think of liquor.

When Saturday came and he found himself in possession of honestly earned funds, he felt a soul-satisfying ease. He decided to invest his first savings in a present for Lorelei; then a graver sense of responsibility seized him, and he wrote to Mrs. Knight as follows:

MY DEAR MOTHER-IN-NEW-JERSEY-LAW:

Enclosed find five handsome examples of the engraver's skill, same being the result of six industrious days. I know your passion for these *objets*

d'art; I appreciate your eagerness to share my father's celebrated collection, and I join you in regrets at your failure to do so. But remember—"as a moth gnaws a garment, so doth envy consume a man." Take these photogravures, love them, cherish them, share them with the butcher, the baker, the hobble-skirt maker, and console yourself with the thought that, although you have lost much, you have gained something above price in me.

Thine, in everlasting fetters,
ROBERT.

Having despatched this missive, he set out to find Jim, for the afternoon was young and he wished to settle his obligations in full. It is well to be systematic; business is largely a matter of system, anyhow, and the tag ends of one week's work should never be allowed to lap over into another.

A round of popular up-town resorts failed to discover Jim, but Bob's search finally brought him to Tony-the-Barber's shop, and here, in the rear room, he found his brother-in-law playing cards with a pop-eyed youth and a repellent person with a cauliflower ear.

Bob's greeting was hearty. "Evening, James," he cried. "Feel like taking your beating here?"

"Eh? What's the matter?" Jim rose from his chair with a shocked intensity of gaze.

"I'm just cleaning up my affairs for the day of rest, and I've come to return your last call. Alas, James, I am a weak vessel! Your work was coarse, but I fell for it." To the other occupants of the room he apologized. "I'm sorry to spoil your little game of authors, but necessity prods me."

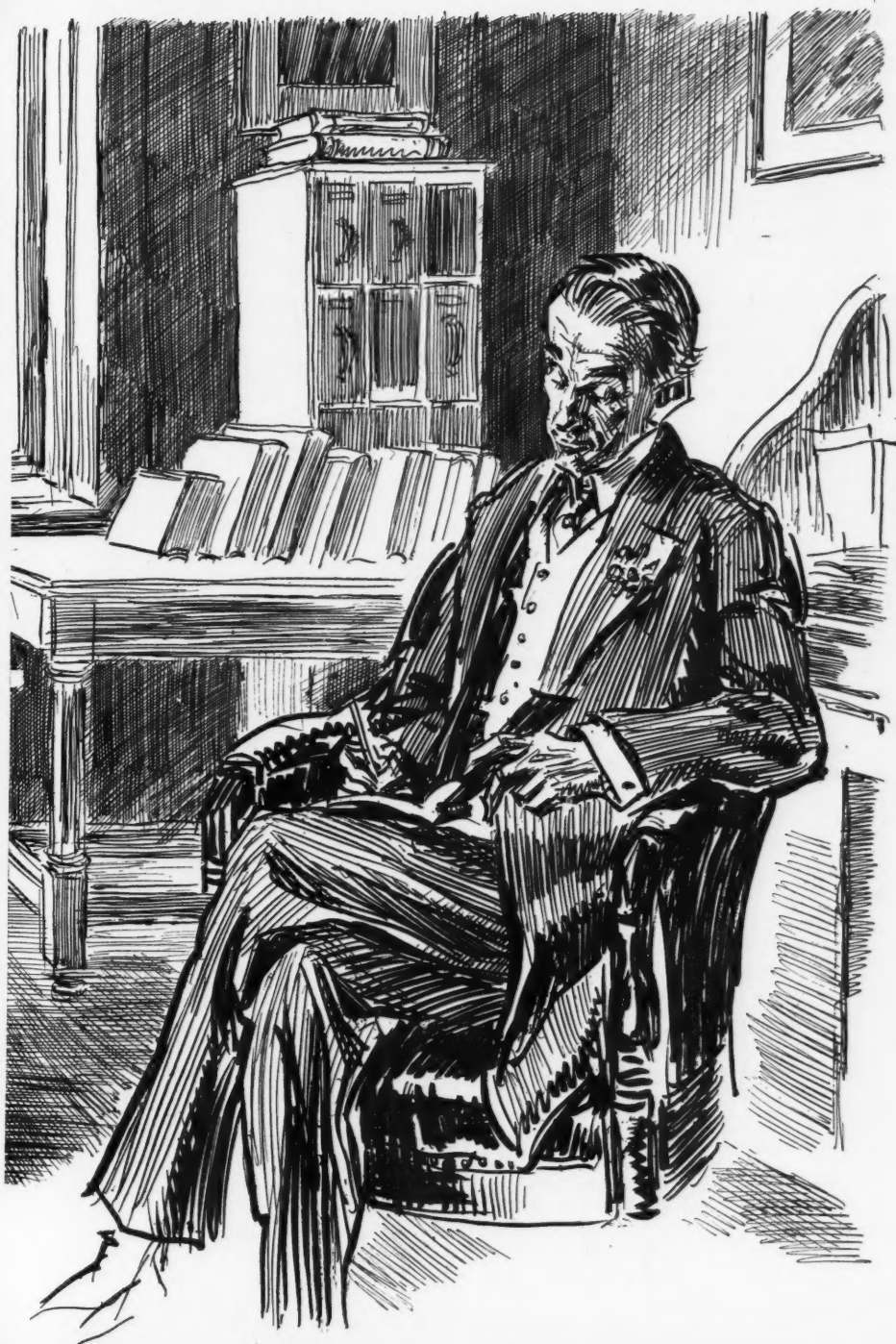
He extended a muscular hand for Jim's collar and found it.

Mr. Armistead was of the emotional type; he leaped to his feet and went to the rescue of his friend, but his first blow was wild. Seizing a chair he swung it aloft—a maneuver which more effectively distracted Bob's attention—but this attack also failed when Bob's fist buried itself in the spongy region of Mr. Armistead's belt-buckle, and that young man promptly lost all interest in Jimmy Knight's affairs. There had been a time when he might have weathered such a blow, but of late years easy living had left its marks; therefore he sat down heavily, all but missing the chair he had just occupied. His eyes bulged more prominently than usual; he became



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

He appealed to Merkle with the same result, but succeeded in borrowing a thousand dollars.



with which he bought Lorelei a set of black opals, going into debt for half the price

The Auction Block

desperately concerned with a strange difficulty in breathing.

Alert, aggressive, Bob turned to face the man with the swollen ear, but Young Sullivan, being a professional fighter, made no capital of amateur affrays and declined the issue with an upraised palm.

"Friends, eh?" Bob panted.

"Brothers!" heartily ejaculated Sullivan, whereupon Bob foiled Jimmy Knight's short cut for the door, and proceeded with the purpose of his call.

It was no difficult matter to chastise Jim, whose spirit was as wretched as his strength—as the wind whips a flag, as a man flaps a dusty garment, so did Bob shake his victim. Jim felt his spine crack and his limbs unjoint. His teeth snapped; he bit his tongue; his heels rattled upon the floor. Bob seemed bent upon shaking the bones from his flesh and the marrow from his bones, and, try as he would, Jim could not prevent the outrage. He struggled; he clawed; he kicked; he yelled; his arms thrashed loosely, like the limber appendages to a stuffed figure.

Mr. Armistead, unnaturally pale, remained seated. He emitted harrowing sounds like those made by air leaking into a defective pump. Sullivan looked on with the lively appreciation of a rough-house expert.

When Bob emerged from the rear room, he found the barber shop in confusion. Tony was leading a charge at the head of his assistants, who were supported, in turn, by the customers, but he fell back at sight of the flushed victor.

"It was nothing but a little family affair," Bob reassured him. "Now, if you please, I'll borrow a hair-brush." In front of a mirror he tidied himself, settled his scarf with a deft jerk, then went out, whistling. As it was nearly time for the matinée, he strolled toward the Circuit Theater, full of a satisfying contentment with the world. Now that he owed it nothing, he resolved to meet his future obligations as they arose.

Early on Monday morning Bob reported for work, only to receive from Mr. Crosset, whom he had always regarded as a warm friend, the notice of his discharge.

"What's the matter? Didn't I make good?" he demanded.

Crosset was a young man; more than once he and Bob had scandalized Broad-

way; some of their exploits were epic. Now he shrugged carelessly, saying:

"Oh! You made good, I guess, but we can't take a chance with you."

"I suppose you're afraid I'll steal some of your chalk."

Crosset grinned, then deponed with extreme gravity: "Bob, you drink! You're unsteady in your habits! It's too bad, but we can't—"

"I don't drink as much as you do."

"Nobody does, but that's beside the question."

"As a matter of fact, I've quit."

This announcement drew a hearty chuckle.

"You're a great comedian, Bob," said Crosset.

After surveying his friend for a moment, Bob responded, with genuine earnestness: "But you're not. This fails to hand me a laugh. Now tell me: how did you wet your feet and whence comes the icy draft?"

"Well, from the direction of Pittsburgh, if you must know. It seems you are an undesirable citizen, Bob—a dangerous character. There's a can tied to you, and we can't afford to antagonize the whole steel trust."

"I see. I'm afraid I'll have to disown that father of mine."

"What's the trouble, anyhow?"

At Bob's explanation, Crosset whistled. "Funny I didn't hear about it. Married and happy, eh? Well, I'm sorry I can't help you—"

"You can."

"How?"

"Lend me five hundred."

"Certainly!"

Crosset lunged at his desk, scribbled a line to the cashier and handed it to Bob, then, in response to a call from the customers' room, dashed away with a hearty farewell.

As Bob passed through the outer office he ran his eye over the opening prices, being half inclined to "scalp" with his sudden wealth; but luck had never run his way, and he reconsidered. Anyhow, there were more agreeable uses to which he could put this money. For one thing, he needed several suits; for another, it was high time he gave Lorelei some little remembrance—he hadn't given her a present in nearly two weeks, and women set great store by such attentions. He decided to invest his money in Maiden Lane and demand

credit from his tailor. But a half-hour at a jewelry shop convinced him that nothing suitable to so splendid a creature as his wife could be purchased for a paltry five hundred dollars, and he was upon the point of returning to Crosset with a request to double the loan, when his common sense asserted itself. Poverty was odious but not shameful, he reflected; ostentation, on the other hand, was vulgar. Would it not be in bad taste to squander this happy windfall upon jewelry when Lorelei needed practical things?

Bob was cheered by the breadth of these sentiments; they showed that he was beginning soberly to realize the leaden responsibilities of a family man. No, instead of a jewel, he would buy his wife—a dog.

At a fashionable up-town kennel he found exactly what he wanted in the shape of a Pekingese—a playful, pedigreed pocket-dog, scarcely larger than his two fists. It was a creature to excite the admiration of any woman; its family tree was taller than that of a Spanish nobleman, and its name was Ying. But, here again, Bob was handicapped by poverty; for sleeve-dogs are expensive novelties, and the price of Ying was seven hundred dollars—marked down from one thousand—and evidently the bargain of a lifetime at that price.

Bob hated to haggle, but he showed that his ability to drive a sharp bargain was merely latent, and he finally bore the animal away in triumph. To outgeneral a dog-fancier was a tribute to his shrewdness; to save two hundred dollars on a single purchase was economy of a high order. Much elated, he set out briskly for his tailor's place of business.

XXI

It still lacked something of luncheon-time when Bob Wharton swung into Fifth Avenue, with Ying snugly ensconced in his coat pocket. Bob was in fine fettle, what with the anticipation of Lorelei's delight at his gift, and the certainty of an agreeable hour with his tailor. It was always a pleasure to deal with Kurtz, for, in his shop, customers were treated with the most delicate consideration. Salesmen, cutters, fitters—all were pleasant acquaintances who displayed neither the fawning obsequiousness of Fifth Avenue trades-

people nor the sullen apathy of Broadway clerks.

Kurtz himself was an artist; he was also a person of generally cultivated taste and a man about town. His pleasure in making a sale was less than his delight at meeting and serving his customers, and his books were open only to those he considered his equals. A stony-faced door-man kept watch and ward in the Gothic hallway to discourage the general public from entering the premises. The fact that Bob owed several hundred dollars dismayed that young man not in the least, for Kurtz never mentioned money matters—the price of garments being, after all, of far less consequence than fit, style, and that elusive something which Kurtz called "effect."

Our daily actions are controlled by a variety of opposing influences which are like threads pulling at us from various directions. When, for any reason, certain of these threads are snapped and the balance is disturbed, we are drawn into strange pathways, and our whole lives may be changed through the operation of what seems a most trivial cause. In Bob's case, the cause approached, all unheralded, in the person of Mr. Richard Cady, a youth whose magnificent vacuity of purpose was the envy of his friends. Cometlike, he was destined to appear, flash brightly, then disappear below the horizon of this tale. Mr. Cady greeted Bob with listless enthusiasm, teetering the while upon his cane like a Japanese equilibrist.

"Haven't seen you for ages," he began. "Been abroad?"

Bob explained that he was spending the summer in New York, a statement that filled his listener with the same horror he would have felt had he learned that Bob was passing the heated season in the miasmatic jungles of the Amazon.

"Just ran down from Newport," Cady volunteered. "I'm sailing to-day. Better join me for a trip. I know"—he cut Bob's refusal short—"travel's an awful nuisance; I get seasick myself."

"Then why play at it?"

Cady rolled a mournful eye upon his friend.

"Girl!" said he hollowly. "Show girl! If I stay I'll marry her, and that wouldn't do. Posi—tive—ly not! So I'm running away. I'll wait over, if you'll join me."

"I'm a working man."

"Haw!" Mr. Cady expelled a short laugh.

"True! And I've quit drinking."

Now Cady was *blasé*, but he had a heart; his sympathies were slow, but he was not insensible to misfortune. Accordingly, he responded with a cry of pity, running his eye over his friend to estimate the ravages of Temperance. Midway in its course, his gaze halted; he passed a silk-gloved palm lightly across his brow and looked again. A tiny head seemed to protrude from Bob's pocket; a pair of bright, inquiring eyes seemed to be peering directly at the observer.

"I—guess I'd better quit, too," said Cady faintly. "Are you—alone?"

Bob gently extracted Ying from his resting-place, and the two men studied him gravely.

"Little beggar, isn't he?" Cady remarked. "Has he got a brother? I'd like to give one like him to—you know."

"He's alone in the world. I'm his nearest of kin."

"Give you five dollars for him," Cady offered.

"I just paid five hundred, and he's worth a thousand. Why, his people came over ahead of the Mayflower."

The gloomy lover was interested; in his face there gleamed a faint desire. "Think of it! Well, make it a thousand; I'll send him in a bunch of orchids. Haw!" He doubled over his stick, convulsed with appreciation of his own originality. But again Bob refused. "Don't be nasty; I'll make it fifteen hundred."

Bob carefully replaced the canine atom and grinned at his friend.

"I need the money, but—nothing doing."

"Up against it?" hopefully inquired the other.

"Broke! I couldn't afford a nickel to see an earthquake."

"I'll lend you fifteen hundred and take Ying as security."

But Bob remained inflexible, and Mr. Cady relapsed into gloom, muttering:

"Gee! You're a rotten business man!"

"So says my heartless father. He has sewed up my pockets and scuttled my drawing-account; hence the dinner-pail on my arm. I'm in quest of toil."

"I'll bet you starve," brightly predicted Mr. Cady, in an effort at encouragement. "I'll lay you five thousand that you make a flivver of anything you try."

"I've quit gambling, too."

As they shook hands, Cady grunted: "My invitation to globe-trot is withdrawn. Fine company you'd be!"

As Bob walked up the Avenue he pondered deeply, wondering if he really were so lacking in ability as his friends believed. Money was such a common thing, after all; the silly labor of acquiring it could not be half so interesting as the spending of it. Anybody could make money, but to enjoy it, to circulate it judiciously, one must possess individuality—of a sort. Money seemed to come to some people without effort, and from the strangest sources—Kurtz, for instance, had grown rich out of coats and trousers!

Bob halted, frowning, while Ying peered out from his hiding-place at the passing throngs, exposing a tiny, limp, pink-ribbon tongue. If Kurtz, armed only with a pair of shears and a foolish tape, had won to affluence, why couldn't another? Stock-broking was no longer profitable—none of Bob's friends had earned their salt for months, and old Hannibal's opposition evidently forced a change of occupation.

The prospect of such a change was annoying but scarcely alarming to an ingrained optimist, and Bob took comfort in reflecting that the best selling literature of the day was replete with instances of disinherited sons, impoverished society men, ruined bankers, or mere idlers, who, by lightning strokes of genius, had mended their fortunes overnight. Some few, in the earlier days of frenzied fiction, had played the market, others the ponies; still others had gone West and developed abandoned gold mines or obscure water-powers. A number, also, had grown disgustingly rich from patenting rat-traps or shoe buttons. One young man had discovered a way to keep worms out of railroad ties and had promptly bludgeoned the railroad companies out of fabulous royalties.

Over the stock-market idea Bob could work up no enthusiasm—he knew too much about it—and inasmuch as horse racing was no longer fashionable, opportunities for a "Pittsburgh Phil" future seemed limited. Moreover, he had never saved a jockey's life or a jockey's mother from eviction, hence feed-box tips were not likely. Nor did he know a single soul in the business of inventing rat-traps or shoe buttons.



DRAWN BY CHARLES DANA GIBSON

The two men studied him gravely. "Little beggar, isn't he?" Cady remarked. "Has he got a brother? I'd like to give one like him to—you know." "He's alone in the world. I'm his nearest of kin." "Give you five dollars for him," Cady offered. "I just paid five hundred, and he's worth a thousand"

As for going West, he was clearly of the opinion that a search for abandoned gold mines or forgotten waterfalls wasn't in his line; and the secret of creosoting railroad ties, now that he came to think of it, was still locked up in the breast of its affluent discoverer. Besides, as the whole episode had occurred in the second act of a play, the safety of building upon it was doubtful, at best.

No; evidently the well-recognized short cuts to wealth had all been obliterated by

many feet, and he must find another. But where? At length Bob's wrinkled brow smoothed itself, and he nodded. His path was plain; it led around the nearest corner to his tailor's door.

Mr. Kurtz's greeting was warm as Bob strolled into the stately showroom with its high-backed, Flemish-oak chairs, its great carved tables, its paneled walls with their antlered decorations. This, it may be said, was not a shop, not a store where clothes were sold, but a studio where men's

distinctive garments were draped, and the difference was perfectly apparent on the first of each month.

Bob gave Ying his freedom, to the great interest of the proprietor, who studied the dog's points with a practised eye.

"Kurtz," began Bob abruptly, "I just bet Dick Cady five thousand dollars that I can make my own living for six months." This falsehood troubled him vaguely, until he remembered that high finance must often be conducted behind a veil.

Mr. Kurtz, genial, shrewd, gray, raised admiring eyes from the capering puppy and said,

"I'll take another five thousand."

But Bob declined. "No, I'm going to work."

This announcement interested the tailor deeply. "Who's going to hire you?" he asked.

"You are."

Kurtz blinked. "Maybe you'd like to bet on that, too," he ventured. "I'll give you odds."

"Work is one of the few things I haven't tried. You need a good salesman."

"No, I don't. I have seven already."

"Say, wouldn't you like the trade of the whole younger set? I can bring you a lot of fresh customers—fellows like me."

"Fresh customers' is right," laughed Kurtz, then sobered quickly. "You're joking, of course?"

"I'm so serious I could cry. How much is it worth to you to make clothes for my crowd?"

"Well"—the tailor considered—"quite a bit."

"The boys like to see Dick trimmed—it's a matter of principle with them never to let him win a bet—and they'll do anything for me. You're the best tailor in the city, but too conservative. Now, I'm going to bring you fifty new accounts, every one good for better than two thousand a year. That's a hundred thousand dollars. How much am I offered? Going! Going——"

"Wait a minute! Would you stick to me for six months if I took you on?"

"My dear Kurtz, I'll poultice myself upon you for life. I'll guarantee myself not to slide, slip, wrinkle, or skid. Thirty years hence, when you come hobbling down to business, you'll find me here."

Mr. Kurtz dealt in novelties, and the idea of a society salesman was sufficiently new to appeal to his commercial sense.

"I'll pay you twenty per cent. for all the new names you put on my books," he offered.

"Make it twenty-five on first orders and twenty on repeaters. I'll bring my own luncheon and pay my car-fare."

"There wouldn't be any profit left," demurred Kurtz.

"Good! Then it's a bargain—twenty-five and twenty. Now watch me grab the adolescent offshoots of our famous Four Hundred."

Bob chased Ying into a corner, captured him, then took a 'bus up the Avenue to the College Club for luncheon.

At three o'clock he returned, accompanied by four flushed young men, whose names gave Kurtz a thrill. In spite of their modish appearance, they declared themselves indecently shabby and allowed Bob to order for them—a favor which he performed with a rajah's lofty disregard of expense. He sat upon one of the carved tables, teasing Ying, and selecting samples as if for a quartet of bridegrooms. Being bosom cronies of Mr. Cady, the four youths needed little urging. When they had gone in to be measured, Kurtz said guardedly:

"Whew! That's more stuff than I've sold in two weeks."

"A mere trifle!" Bob grinned happily. "Say, Kurtz, this is the life! This is the job for me—panhandling juvenile plutocrats—no office-hours, no heavy lifting, and Thursdays off. I'm going to make you famous."

"You'll break me, with another run like this."

"How much did they order?"

The proprietor ran over his figures incredulously.

"Twenty-four sack suits, two riding-suits, one knicker, four evening suits, four dinner-suits, forty fancy waistcoats, sixteen evening waistcoats, four pairs riding-breeches, four motor-coats, three vicugna overcoats, two ulsters. You don't think they're bluffing?"

"Why should they bluff? They'll never discover how many suits they have. Now, figure it up and tell me the bad news."

Mr. Kurtz did as directed, announcing, "Fifty-five hundred and five dollars."

"Pikers!" exclaimed the new salesman; then he began laboriously to compute twenty-five per cent. of the sum, using as a pad a bolt of expensive white-silk vest material. "Thirteen hundred seventy-six dollars and twenty-five cents is my blackmail, Kurtz. That's what I call 'a safe-and-sane Fourth.' Not bad for dull times, and yet it might be better. Anyhow, it's the hardest thirteen hundred and seventy-six dollars I ever earned."

"Hard!"

The merchant's lips twitched, oscillating his cigar violently. "Hard! I'll bet those fellows even bought your lunch. I suppose you mean it's the first money you ever—earned." He seemed to choke over the last word. "Well, it's worth something to get men like these on the books, but—thirteen hundred and seventy-six dollars—"

"And twenty-five cents."

Mr. Kurtz gulped.

"In one day! Why, I could buy a farm for that. How much will you have to 'earn' to cover your living-expenses for six months?"

"Ah, there we journey into the realms of purest speculation." Bob favored him with a sunny smile. "As well ask me how much my living-expenses must be in order to cover my earnings. Whatever one is, the other will be approximately ditto—or perhaps slightly in excess thereof. Anyhow, nothing but rigid economy—bane of my life—will make the one fit into the other. But I have a thought. Something tells me these boys need white flannels; so get out your stock, Kurtz. If they can't play tennis, they must learn for my sake."

Bob's remarkable stroke of fortune called for a celebration, and his four customers clamored that he squander his first profits forthwith. Ordinarily such a course would have been just to his liking; but now he was dying to tell Lorelei of his triumph, and fearing to trust himself with even one drink, he escaped from his friends as soon as possible.

Thus it chanced that he arrived home sober.

It was a happy home-coming, for Ying was adorable and made his way instantly into Lorelei's heart, while Bob was in a state of exaltation. He had no desire to

bind himself to Kurtz's service for six months, or for any other period; or had he the least thought of living up to his agreement until Lorelei began to treat the matter seriously. Then he objected blankly.

"Why, it was all right as a joke, but I don't want to be a *tailor*! There's no romance in woolen goods."

"How much do you owe?" she asked.

"Really, I've no idea. It's something you don't have to remember—somebody always reminds you in plenty of time, and then you borrow enough to pay up."

"Let's forget the romance and pay up without borrowing. Remember you have two families to support." Noting that the idea of permanent employment galled him, she added craftily, "Of course, you'll never sell another lot of clothes like this, but—"

"Why not? It's like selling candy to a child."

"You can't go with that crowd without drinking."

"Is that so? Now you sit tight and hold your hat on. I can make that business pay if I try, and still stay in the Rain-maker's Union. There's big money in it—enough so we can live the way we want to. I'm sick of this telephone-booth, anyhow; we'll present it to some nice news-boy and rent an apartment with a closet. This one's so small I don't dare to let my trousers bag. Besides, we've been under cover long enough, and I want you to meet the people I know. We can afford the expense—now that I'm making thirteen hundred and seventy-six dollars and twenty-five cents a day."

"I should like to know nice people," Lorelei confessed. "I'm sick of the kind I've met; the men are indecent and the women are vulgar. I've always wanted to know the other kind."

Bob was delighted: his fancy took fire, and already he was far along toward prosperity.

"You'll make a hit with the younger set; you'll be a perfect rave. Bert Hayman told me to-day that his married sister is entertaining a lot, and since the drama will be tottering on its way to destruction without you in a few days, I'll tell him to see that we're invited out to Long Island for a week-end."

The next instalment of *The Auction Block* will appear in the August issue.



The Vampire

By James S. Ryan

Drawing by Charles A. Winter

SHE loved the man for his form and face,
For his strength and his will to decide;
She loved his smile, his wit, and his grace—
But above all she loved his pride.

And the man forgot his Maker's name
In the rage of his passion's fire;
For this sweet woman the man became
The slave of his soft desire.

For better than that what could you ask?
Why, the devil could be defied!
But the woman had set herself a task,
And that was to kill his pride.

A man's a fool by a woman's side.
And a woman will play her part;
She tried her damndest to kill his pride,
And she only broke his heart.

His charm was shattered—his wit as well—
And the man, he went drifting wide,
In rags and squalor and drink and hell,
But he still hung on to his pride.

Love is a thing that sways with the tide
(What woman can do she will),
But above all else she had loved his pride—
The thing she had tried to kill.

The devil he plays a cunning part
In throwing us all astray.
Oft woman craves in her inmost heart
For the thing she has thrown away.

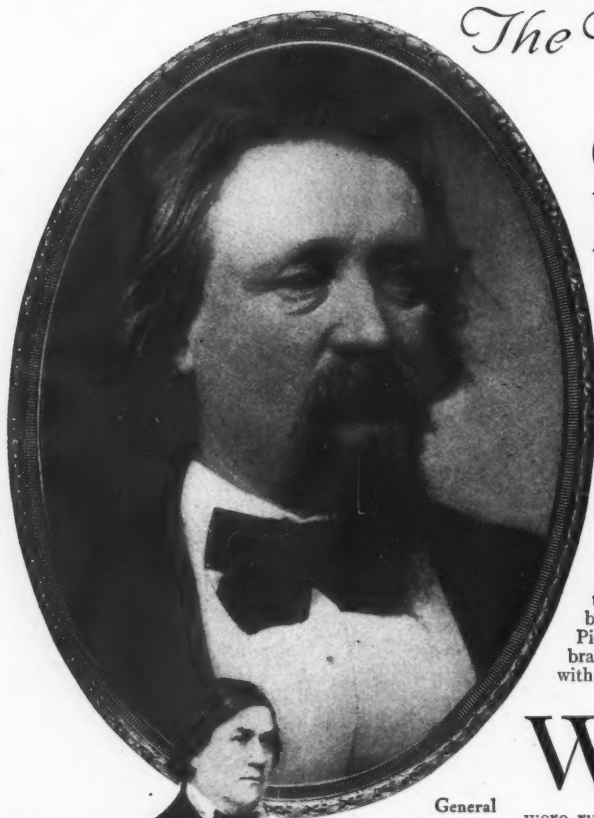
The woman clutched at the wretched beast,
Sobbing, "Love, with me abide!"
He straightened himself and faced the east—
And walked away in his pride.

And her love went out a thousandfold
To the pride that she could not kill;
She broke her heart; It's a story old—
And the devil is smiling still.



The Wartime Story of General Pickett

By
Mrs General
George E. Pickett



General Pickett, after his retirement to private life. (Left) R. M. T. Hunter, of the Confederate Senate, leader of the opposition to the Davis administration during the war, and a frequent visitor at the Picketts' home

EDITOR'S NOTE—To no class of men did the future seem more dark after the fall of the Confederacy than that which consisted of the leaders of the Southern army. There was now no way in which they could follow their profession at home, and most of them were unfitted for any other. Enlistment in foreign service lay open to them. Some of them did this, but General Pickett resolved to begin life anew. In this instalment, Mrs. Pickett gives a memorable picture of a brave soldier endeavoring to fight the world with unfamiliar weapons.

WHEN the war ended, we accepted my father's invitation to his home. The railroads were torn up and no boats were running. Through the courtesy of old army friends, we were taken on a government transport from Richmond down the James River and up the Chuckatuck to the home in Nansemond. There we remained only a short time before General Ingalls confidentially warned my Soldier that General B. F. Butler was trying to incite hostility against him, and urged that he would be safer on foreign ground. General Pickett did not believe that there was danger and preferred to stay, but when Mr. Browning, of Illinois, his own and Mr. Lincoln's old friend, added his advice to the same effect, he reluctantly yielded and went to Canada, whither I followed as soon as a telegram indicated that he had made the journey in safety and told me where I might join him.

The wave of passion that rolled over the country after the assassination of President Lincoln was still at its height, and the train on which I journeyed through New York was crowded with returning soldiers, some of them released prisoners with pale, cadaverous, unshaven faces and long, unkempt hair. One from Andersonville,

more emaciated and ragged than the others, was selling his pictures and describing the horrors of his prison life. As he told of his sufferings, amid groans of sympathy, maledictions and curses were hurled against my people. Once his long, bony arm and hand seemed to be stretched menacingly toward me as he drew the picture of "the martyred Lincoln, whose blood," said he, "cries out for vengeance. We follow his hearse; let us swear hatred to these people against whom he warred, and, as the cannon beats the hours with solemn progression, renew with each sound unappeasable hatred."

AN UNPLEASANT JOURNEY

I crouched back into my seat, almost holding my breath as I pressed my baby to my wildly beating heart.

A man who, I am sure, had never been a soldier and had never fought for his cause, for brave soldiers are magnanimous and generous always, stood up in a seat almost opposite mine and said:

"When I think of the horrors of Libby and Andersonville and look at these poor sufferers, I not only want to invoke the vengeance of a just God but I want to take a hand in it, myself. Quarter should be shown to none—every man, woman, and child of this accursed Southern race should be put in bondage to their own slaves for a specified length of time, that they might know the curse of serfdom. Their lands should be confiscated and given to those whom they have so long and so cruelly wronged."

As he, in detail, related the story of their scanty allowance, the filth and darkness of their cells, I longed to get up and plead for my people, and tell how they, too, were without soap, food, or clothes; to say that we had no medicines, even, except what were smuggled through the lines, and that our own poor soldiers were barefooted and starving, and that all the sufferings of prisoners on both sides could have been avoided by carrying out the terms proposed by the Confederate government.

At last I safely reached the end of my journey and found a home, for a time, in the house of some friends of my Soldier who had been called to England.

Some of our old associates in the Confederacy were in Montreal, and we enjoyed reunions that kept with us memories of the old days at home. Among these were Mr. Beverly Tucker, Mr. Beverly Saunders,

and Generals Magruder and Breckinridge, of wartime fame. A pleasant social occasion was the marriage of General Magruder's niece to an English officer. At the wedding-breakfast given them by the governor-general the conversation turned upon Gettysburg, and the governor-general asked my Soldier who he thought was to blame for the loss of the battle.

"Yeth, Pickett," said General Magruder, with his characteristic lisp; "now the battle is over, who do you think was to blame?"

Bowing to the two questioners, my Soldier replied with a twinkle in his eye,

"Well, I think, my Lord Governor and General Magruder, that—the Yankees had a *little* something to do with it."

It had been considered wise for us to live under an assumed name because exiles were being arrested and taken across the lines. Mr. Tucker and Mr. Saunders were among them, but were returned upon demand of the British government. We were called "Mr. and Mrs. Edwards," a change to which I soon became accustomed and ceased to look around in surprise, expecting to see a stranger, when addressed by my new name. I became so fond of my exile home that it was almost a disappointment when a letter came from General Grant, who had learned of our self-inflicted exile and wrote to assure us that the terms of the cartel with General Lee should be observed, even though it should necessitate another declaration of war.

On returning, we had expected to make a very short stay in New York, but my Soldier's old comrades welcomed us with such cordiality and did so much for our pleasure that we spent two weeks there. Thence we went to our ruined home, Turkey Island, on the James River, where we built a small cottage in place of the Colonial mansion burned by Butler.

A HOME IN RUINS

The ancestral trees had been cut, even the monuments in the family cemetery had been mutilated. The top of the one erected by William and Mary Randolph had also been broken off by Butler's troops. On one side of the shaft was the inscription:

The foundation of this pillar was laid in 1771, when all the great rivers of this country were swept by inundations, never before experienced, which changed the face of nature and left traces of their violence that will remain for ages.

The Wartime Story of General Pickett

This monument is still standing. In a letter sent me from Turkey Island by my Soldier, he describes it as it was at that time:

The birds are nesting and songs are being born just where Butler's vandals mutilated and broke off the top of this monument, hunting for hidden treasure. Some of the seeds which the mother-birds carried to their young have fallen by the wayside and taken root, and, now, out of the jagged, broken top grows a greenery of unknown vines and plants and flowers.

Soon after the surrender, the Khedive of Egypt offered my Soldier the position of general in his army, which he declined. When he refused a second invitation, the khedive cabled to his representative, Mr. Mott, to ask if there was any way of inducing General Pickett to accept the position. But my Soldier was tired of battles and wanted a home, and I wanted him, and no foreign inducements could tempt us to a life of war.

He tried to turn his sword into a plowshare, but he was not expert with plowshares, and, worse, he constantly received applications from old comrades no more skilled than he. All were made welcome, though they might not be able to distinguish a rake from a rail fence or know whether potatoes grew on trees or trellised vines. They would get up when they felt like it, linger over breakfast, go out to the fields, and if the sun was too hot or the wind too cold, they would come back to sit on the veranda or around the fire till dinner was ready. Then they would linger at table, telling war-stories, until

it was unanimously decided to be too late for any more work that day. Among them were officers who had served in every grade, but all of one rank now, and he who desired a graphic history of the four years' war needed only to listen to the conversation of the agricultural army at Turkey Island. The inevitable soon came. Resources were



FROM MENSERVE COLLECTION

General J. B. Magruder, who, for a time, was a member of the Confederate army colony in Montreal

exhausted, and proprietor and guests were forced to seek other fields.



DRAWN BY G. PATRICK MASON



"Once his
long, bony arm
and hand seemed to
be stretched menacingly
toward me"

Among the visitors at our home at Turkey Island was Mr. R. M. T. Hunter. I well remember his grave but genial face, beardless, marked with deep lines wrought by study and care. Those who do not remember him may look at the pictured face of former Senator John W. Daniel, of Virginia, and gain an idea of his appearance. His long hair, almost touching his shoulders, gave him an air that would seem quaint to one accustomed to the closely cropped heads of the present day. His extensive acquaintance with public life, gained in the Congress of the United States and that of the Confederacy, had secured for him an inexhaustible fund of anecdote which his ready wit displayed to good effect, and his vein of humor made him always a welcome companion. His ability to deal with weighty subjects is indicated by a remark of Senator Wigfall: "I

don't know what we Southern men would do without Hunter; he is the only one among us who knows anything about finance." As a child, his gravity and fondness for books led his old mammy to say, "Li'l Marse Robert gwine ter be a gre't man; he's so lonesome in his ways."

Mr. Hunter knew men, and was the first to discover the genius of "Stonewall" Jackson. In a letter written to my Soldier near the beginning of the war, he congratulated the South upon the possession of so great a military man as General Jackson. Mr. Hunter was one of those whom Mr. Lincoln wished to see in Richmond after the surrender, expressing confidence in his honesty and his influence with the Southern people, a meeting which was prevented by the absence of Mr. Hunter from Richmond at the time, and for which there was no later opportunity because of the death of the President.

Some of the Northern officers, who had seen little of plantation life, visited us and were deeply interested in the characteristic features of our domestic circle. They found amusement in the repartee and originality of the negroes, liking to ask them questions

and discuss with them subjects of everyday life.

"What a lot of terrapin and what immense ones, Uncle Tom!" said General Ingalls. "How much do you get for them, and where do you sell them?"

"Yas, suh; dey is 'mense 'case dey's fresh-watuh tarepin; salt-water ones is littler, en dey's mo' 'spensive; dat's part de reason dat dey's called di'mun'-back. I gits over en above a couple er ninepences apiece fer 'em, en I sells 'em up in Richmond ter Mr. Montero, de gambler gemman. You mus' 'scuse me, marsa, fer answerin' you in retail."

"Why, Uncle Tom, you could get over a dollar apiece for these terrapin in New York," the general replied.

Uncle Tom pointed to a bucket of water and, looking at the general, said:

"Yas, suh, marsa; I 'spec's dat's so. En, suh, ef I had dat bucket er watuh in hell I could git a million er dollars fer hit."

QUESTIONS OF PROPRIETORSHIP

The servants had a method of their own of settling questions of ownership, regardless of the general laws of property, and the visitors amused themselves by inquiring as to the possessions about the place.

"Whose horse is that?" asked General Pitcher, of one of the boys "mindin' de cows."

"Dat hoss? W'y, marsa, hosses allers b'longs ter de men folks; so cou'se dat hoss b'longs ter Marse George."

"And whose cows are those?"

"De women folks allers owns de cows; so cou'se dey's Miss Sally's cows."

"Whose chickens are those in the yard?"

"Dey's woman's t'ings, too, en cou'se dey's Miss Sally's."

"To whom do those mules belong?"

"Dey's jes' only mules en dey don' hab no owners. Dey don' b'long ter nobody 'specially, en don' nobody want 'em 'specially, cep'n fer ter wu'k. Mules, marsa, is mules. Dey's diff'unt fum udder prop'ty; dey ain' one t'ing ner de yuther."

Looking up, General Pitcher saw a flock of wild ducks flying across the river.

"Whose ducks are those?" he asked.

The boy looked up and turned to the general with an expression of scorn and contempt.

"Dey's dey own ducks," he asserted emphatically. "W'y, marsa, whar you been

all yo' life not ter know dat w'ile ducks is dey own ducks?"

When some of my Soldier's friends wished to nominate him for governor of Virginia, he said that he never again would hold any office but he would be glad to see his old brigadier, Kemper, elected governor. General Kemper was the only one of Pickett's brigadiers who came out of the battle of Gettysburg, and he was maimed for life. He was elected governor, and, as he was a bachelor, my Soldier and I often assisted at his receptions. At a dinner given by the governor to George Augustus Sala, the English correspondent, Mr. Sala asked,

"General Pickett, whom do you regard as the hero of the battle of Gettysburg, on the Northern side?"

"Mr. Sala, the hero of Gettysburg on both the Northern and the Southern side was the private soldier," was the reply.

I had often heard my Soldier say that not the generals but the men in the ranks fought the battles.

Soon after General Grant became President, he sent an order to my Soldier, and Mrs. Grant extended an invitation to me and our little ones to visit them at the White House. The train from Virginia, which was usually late, was for once on time, and we came out of the station just as the President's carriage drove up.

"Hello, Pickett!" he called out. "Up to your old war-tricks, coming in ahead of the train."

My first view of Washington was from the President's carriage.

A VISIT AT THE WHITE HOUSE

Mrs. Grant was a beautiful hostess, and all went well till night came, when I was so afraid that my baby would cry and disturb our hosts that I could hardly sleep. The next day when the general spoke of my uneasiness, the President, putting his stick between the child's legs and setting his hat on the little head, said,

"Tell them that you will do as you please and that the whole place belongs to you."

One evening, when we were reminiscing, I told Mrs. Grant of the first time I had seen her, on the Bermuda Hundred lines. Much to my dismay, my Soldier, who loved to tease me, repeated my belligerent remarks upon that occasion and also a statement, which he had made at the time,



DRAWN BY G. PATRICK DELANY

"If the sun was too hot, they would come back to sit on the veranda till dinner was ready"

The Wartime Story of General Pickett

that Mrs. Grant was cross-eyed and did not know directions, or she would not let them shoot toward us.

"And, do you know, Pickett," the President said, relieving my embarrassment, "that once we were foolish enough to think seriously of having an operation performed upon her dear eyes? We had consulted the best surgeons and had been assured that it was a very simple thing. As the time drew near, the more I thought of it the more I did not want my wife's eyes changed. The hour for the operation was almost at hand and I was opening the door when I stopped and said:

"My dear, I know that I am very selfish and ought not to say what I am going to say, but I don't want to have your eyes fooled with. They are all right as they are. They are the same eyes I looked into when I fell in love with you. I have felt and seen that expression in them through all the years since. I should miss the way you have always looked. So, if you don't mind, please, let's keep your dear eyes just as they are."

"She looked up with a surprised joy, saying,

"Why, it was only for your sake that I was even thinking of having anything done, and if you feel in that way about it, I—I—"

"Well, Pickett, I was glad, and she was glad. I untied the bonnet-strings and took her by the hand, and we turned and walked back from the door as light-hearted as a pair of children."

"Untied the bonnet-strings!" exclaimed Mrs. Grant. "You just pulled them into a hard knot, then broke them and threw the bonnet on the floor."

He reached over and patted her hand, and the President of the United States looked into the same eyes that had looked their love into those of the young captain in years ago and had become dearer to him with the passing of time.

THE BLUE AND THE GRAY TALK IT OVER

The President and my Soldier often talked of the war, discussing it from their opposite view-points. Never once did General Grant refer to us as "rebels." He always mentioned us as "you fellows on the other side."

President Grant was deeply interested in the battle of Gettysburg, of which he knew only by report. One day, at the

close of dinner, he asked my Soldier to explain certain movements in the final charge. To make the inquiry plainer, he drew some lines on the table-cloth with the handle of a spoon. My Soldier took the spoon from him and slowly drew upon the cloth a diagram, briefly explaining it as he went along:

"Here is Seminary Ridge; there Cemetery Ridge. Here is Round Top. This is Meade's left; here, Meade's right. There are the Confederate troops in the woods; here, Gettysburg. There is the Fifth Corps. Here are the batteries and troops; there, Hall's brigade. Here are Cushing and Webb. Here is Clark's brigade; there, a rail fence. Here is the Third Brigade."

Lining off a space at one corner to enlarge the vital point of the charge, he continued:

"Here is the turning-point of the third day. There is the stone wall we crossed. There is Webb. Here is the Confederate assault. There is where Armistead got over; here, where he fell." Then, drawing his hand quickly across the corner beyond, he added, "There, is hell!"

"Bring me a blue pencil," said the President to a servant. When it was brought, he carefully marked over the lines made with the spoon in the soft-laid cloth. "Now bring me some shears," he said, and, cutting out the map, he took the spoon from my Soldier's hand and carried the two into the smoking-room.

A MEMORY OF GRANT

The tenderest memory I have of General Grant, because it is the one closest to my heart, is of him and my Soldier as they stood facing each other in the President's office just before the close of our visit. I can see them now, looking earnestly into each other's eyes, one of General Grant's hands on the shoulder of his old comrade and friend.

Grant, always faithful to his friends, was urging upon my Soldier, whom the war had impoverished, the marshalship of the state of Virginia. My Soldier, knowing the demands upon the President, knowing that if he accepted the appointment, sorely as he needed it, it would create for the administration a host of enemies, said,

"You can't afford to do this for me, and I can't afford to let you do it."

"I can afford to do anything I choose," said the President.

PHOTOGRAPH FROM
MERRY CO-
LUTION



General Grant and family after the close of the war

I shall never forget the gratitude in my Soldier's tear-dimmed eyes as he turned them upon the President, showing his appreciation of the friendship and sacrifice, or General Grant's look, or what those two old friends did—never—as silently shaking hands and walking off in different directions, they gazed out of separate windows, and I stole away.

My Soldier had been urged to take a position at a large salary in connection with the Louisiana Lottery, involving his name and the duty of going to New Orleans each month to assist in superintending the drawing. He declined, because his name was not for sale, and he did not wish to be associated with games of chance.

After the failure of the military system of agriculture developed at Turkey Island, my Soldier became the general agent for the South of a prominent life insurance



Portrait of President Lincoln taken shortly before his assassination

company. The officers of the company were his friends, and everything possible was done to make the work successful and as little unpleasant as might be, but when he would start to his office with as much of a business expression as he knew how to assume, he could not avoid producing the effect of a gladiator going out to peg shoes.

His friends said that they had to do all the soliciting, and the only way to induce him to insure them was to corner him and demand the issuance of a policy as consideration for his release. Through all the unpleasant incidents that attended his way, the thought of home and his dear ones was the lodestar which shone upon his path and inspired him to his strongest effort.

My Soldier's office was in Richmond, where we lived. We had friends who made the home city very pleasant, notwithstanding the many sad changes the years had brought to our



General B. F. Butler, whose hostility to Pickett caused him to remove to Canada

beautiful Queen of the South, who had risen from her ashes, the crimson stain upon her white garments making her all the more precious to her adoring children.

At Turkey Island, one evening after the steamer had blown her three whistles in honor of my Soldier, as the river steamers always did in passing our wharf, and had gone around the bend, we saw Uncle Tom, the faithful old negro fisherman, coming up the hill with a bag over his stooping shoulders, talking to himself more excitedly than usual.

"Good evening, Uncle Tom," I said, stepping off the porch to greet him. "What have you in your bag for me?"

"Tarepins—dat's whut I got fer you, but I got a piece er my mind fer Marse George, en ez dis piece er mind mought not agree wid your temperation, I reckon you better g'long in de house en sing some er dem song-chunes while I's makin' a present er de piece er mind ter Marse George."

As my curiosity was greater than my fear of mental indigestion, I stayed to share with my Soldier the "piece of mind."

"You know, Marse George," Uncle Tom began, "dar's a cyarpitbagger white man over yander at de Bermuda Hunderds dat says he's own brother ter dat yuther cyarpitbagger dat wuz sellin' all dem boxes er 'intment ter tu'n we all's nigger-meat inter white-folks' meat, en he says dat you's ter blame fer his brother's bein' put in jail fer sellin' dat' intment en gittin' all dat false-pretense money dat he got fer hit. So he's stirred up all dem po' fool niggers 'g'inst you, en dey's mekin' dar plans ter come ober yer attar you, en ef dey does, de Lord in heben only knows whut's gwine ter be de outshot er hit all! You know, Marse George, dat cyarpitbagger is meked all dem po' fool niggers b'liebe, too, dat ef you hadn't skeered his brother off befo' he'd got his full load er bridles en saddles, de colored folks would all er got dar land en mules fum de goberment dat de goberment promised 'em."

THE SCHEMES OF A CARPETBAGGER

The man who thus excited Uncle Tom's indignation had lain out in the river with his vessel for weeks, sending out his emissaries to tell the poor credulous colored people that the United States government had authorized him to promise that to every colored man who would bring him

a good bridle and saddle, thereby showing his fitness for such a possession, should be given a mule to fit the bridle and saddle, and that he would receive and receipt for the same every night between the hours of midnight and daybreak. So successful was this impostor that he had almost made up his load before he was caught, and there was hardly a bridle and saddle left in all the surrounding country.

While my Soldier had confidence in Uncle Tom's truthfulness, he did not much believe that the negroes would dare make an attack upon him. He insisted, though, that I should not run any risk, but should take our babies and go to Richmond for a few days. Finding that no persuasion could induce me to leave him, he consented that we might wait together, fearing, yet not believing, that they would come.

The third night after Uncle Tom's warning, when we had begun to hope he had, after all, been misinformed, we heard a rapping at the door and then a low growl.

A MOMENT OF PERIL

"That's Rufus rapping at the door with his tail," said my Soldier. "He hears something and is warning us. Listen!"

He opened the door and the dog entered, trembling and with great tears of fear in his loyal eyes. There was no person in sight. We listened, but heard nothing. My Soldier came in and shut the door.

"Lay the baby down," he said, "and take this, but keep it out of sight," handing me a pistol.

His loaded gun was resting on a bracket just above the door. Rufus stood pointing, his nose nearly touching the panel of the door. My heart seemed almost bursting from my throat and sounded in my ear like the beating of a drum. The baby smiled and dreamed aloud. While we listened tensely, there came the sound of footsteps, the rolling of loose dirt and brickbats.

"Listen!" said my Soldier. "They are coming around the back way and across the ruins of the old house. I hear a number of steps, but they are uncertain steps. Don't be afraid, dear; be your own plucky little self."

"I am not the least afraid," I said, my teeth chattering and my hands trembling, "not the least, Soldier."

Rufus turned his head and looked at me as if he had heard a stranger's voice, and

then, wagging his tail to reassure me, returned to a dead point. The sounds became louder, and the surging wave rolled nearer. The mob was led by a renegade white man, who, when it reached a point where possible danger lay, retired from leadership and withdrew to a protected spot in the rear.

My Soldier stepped out on the porch and confronted the mob, which was yelling, cursing, and brandishing pistols, knives, and all manner of weapons. Looking at the negroes for a few seconds, he said:

"Boys, what does all this mean? What is all this trouble about? You don't know what you are doing. That cowardly dog there, sneaking and crouching down behind you to save his own worthless carcass, is not your friend. For a few handfuls of money he will lead you to steal, lie, and kill. All he wants is what he can make out of you. Don't trust him, boys. These Yankee scalawags haven't any love for you. They never owned any negroes. We who owned you are your friends."

"Dat's so, niggers; dat's so," cried Uncle Tom, who had come up with the mob as if he were one of them in spirit. "You'd better listen ter Marse George. He sho' is tellin' you de trufe, niggers,—de gorspel trufe."

"Stand back! Stand back!" cried my Soldier, suddenly starting forth and waving both hands. "Stand back, I say!"

The negroes fell back on both sides, and

my Soldier went down between them to where the white renegade was cowering behind his poor, ignorant, impulsive black dupes, and seizing him by the collar, shook him with all his force. The collar broke and the man fell to the ground. My Soldier jumped on top of him and called, "Bring me that rope!" pointing to the clothes-line stretched across the road. "Come, boys, let's tie the scoundrel!"

After they had securely bound him, the general ordered several of them to pick him up and carry him to the smoke-house and lock him in, which they did with great gusto, their mercurial natures having now veered completely to the side of my Soldier.

"Now, boys," said he, "get into your boats and go back home, and be thankful that the bad man locked up there in the haunted smoke-house with the rats and ghosts has not made you all commit a crime, too, for which you would be sent to jail."

The reference to the spectral inhabitants of the smoke-house was, for the colored people, a sufficient bar to their possible change of sentiment and return to the rescue of their former leader. They believed implicitly in the uncanny reputation of that house, and this was more formidable than the armies of the world.

The next morning, the sheriff took the prisoner to Richmond, where he was jailed and promptly brought to trial. He was found guilty of inciting a riot and was sent out of the county.

The last instalment of *The Wartime Story of General Pickett* will appear in the August issue.



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THE NEW ADVENTURES OF

Get - Rich - Quick Wallingford

The kids are learning. They're beginning to develop schemes of their own—which is distinctly bad for J. Rufus' peace of mind. However crooked he may be, he doesn't want his son to follow in his footsteps. Can he prevent it? In this story, he makes a new resolution and takes Blackie along with him. Henceforth, they will go in for nothing but clean, straight, legitimate enterprises—so they think. They will be examples for the boys. But read and see what happens to the first straight legitimate enterprise in which they embark.

By George Randolph Chester

Author of "Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford," "The Cash Intrigue," etc.

Illustrated by Charles E. Chambers

"THIS is certainly my hex-day!" declared Violet Bonnie Daw, bursting into the Wallingford library and plumping herself in a big leather chair. "Somebody stood on a murderer's grave and cursed a wish on me! Blackie, where's that letter?"

Blackie Daw, in whose nose there were dents of recent agitation, came stalking in from the hall, and, jerking an envelop from his pocket, slammed it down before J. Rufus and Fannie, who had been sitting with grave faces at the head of the big table.

"From Wizen," guessed Wallingford soberly. "I suppose ours is just like it."

Fannie Wallingford held up the letter which had lain in her lap under her folded hands. There were traces of tears in her eyes. Violet Bonnie took the letter and tore it open.

"The same old bunk!" she exclaimed, and read the communication in a scornfully mincing tone, supposed to be an exact imitation of the writer's conversational delivery.

Mr. Wizen, as principal of the Tarryville Military Institute, presents his compliments to Mrs. Wallingford, and begs the favor of an interview with her on the subject of certain grave moral tendencies in Master Wallingford, also in Master Wallingford's companion and foster-brother, Master Jessup.

Blackie Daw rested his knuckles on the edge of the table and crossed one foot over the other.

"I have this to say," he observed. "If Professor Wizen don't make good on these

libelous insinuations, I'll make him eat these letters without mayonnaise."

"I wonder what the boys have done," worried Jimmy Wallingford's mother.

"Done? Nothing!" vehemently asserted Violet Bonnie, jerking open her vanity box and powdering her nose with vicious dabs. It had an inclination to become red as she became angry. "Our Toad hasn't been a minute's trouble since Jim and Blackie adopted him; and everybody knows that your Jimmy's the smartest boy in Tarryville."

That was the trouble—young Jimmy's smartness. The cleverness and ingenuity he had inherited from his father were so pronounced as to be dangerous. Fannie Wallingford stole a troubled glance at her husband. What else might her son have inherited from J. Rufus Wallingford?

"I cannot believe that they have done anything extremely wrong," she stated, concealing her misgiving. "However, I do not think we should see Professor Wizen until we have given the boys a chance. Do you, Jim?"

Wallingford had sat in gloomy silence, tugging thoughtfully at his mustache.

"No," he decided. "We'll wait."

So it was that the boys, bounding home from school with glowing faces and bulging pockets, found the big library clothed in mystery and soggy silence. Huge Jim Wallingford, who usually preferred a chair the size of a hansom cab, sat on a hard bench at the end of the table, with an ex-

pression of supernatural gravity on his round, pink face. Blackie Daw, with his mustache in a state of dragged distress, sat huddled small in the narrow space between the grandfather's clock and the statue of Truth. Fannie Wallingford was motionless, with her fingers interlaced in her lap; and there was a steely glitter in the eyes of Violet Bonnie. The only break in the silence was the ticking of the grandfather's clock. Toad Jessup stood in puzzled bewilderment, but young Jimmy Wallingford, after a swift survey of the room, flushed slightly and sat down near the foot of the long table.

"Boys," said Wallingford sternly, clearing the husk from his voice, "we have communications from Professor Wizen which indicate that you have been getting into mischief."

"Has old Wizen snitched on us?" demanded Toad, rumpling his already tousled hair, and every freckle on his face blazing saffron with indignation. "Well, Jimmy, what do you think of that?"

Jimmy shrugged his shoulders, but he stole a glance at his mother from under his long lashes, and his face flushed slightly.

"He said he'd write." The tone was perfectly even and clear.

"What was the trouble?" demanded Wallingford.

"And whatever it is, boys, don't be afraid to speak up," broke in Violet Bonnie, snapping and unsnapping her vanity box. "Remember, we're back of you!"

"It ain't anything," declared Toad, leaning confidently against the table, and including them all in the gaze of his clear, blue eyes. "It's about those red sparklers Daddy Blackie brought us from New Orleans. You know, we're collecting agates up at the school—fancy-colored ones and special-marked ones."

"I knew it was some fool thing like that!" asserted Violet Bonnie triumphantly.

"Well, go on," ordered the cold voice of Wallingford. "There's more than that."

Toad's shoulders squared a trifle, and, for just a moment, young Jimmy turned his calm eyes upon his father's.

"Well, the fellows were crazy for our agates, but we wouldn't trade," resumed Toad, "and the longer we wouldn't trade the more they wanted them. They offered us ten and twelve of any other kind for one of ours, and Popsy Taylor even offered us

his big speckled green with the pink spots, besides two robin's-egg blues, for a red sparkler. We took that. The big speckled green is the rarest specimen in the T. M. I.! Looky!"

He began tumbling marbles from his pockets into his cap, agates of all colors and sizes, reducing his bulges to an astonishing extent, until, at last, he produced the rare speckled green and proudly passed it for inspection. Violet Bonnie kissed him effusively as he came to her, and Fannie Wallingford patted his brown hand.

"But where are the red sparklers?" inquired Blackie. He was up now and peering into Toad's cap. He took a handful of the marbles and examined them with the eye of an agate connoisseur.

"We haven't any red sparklers!" shrilled Toad gleefully. "Mince Pie Prue got in a lot of them to sell at a nickel apiece. She keeps the candy store. We're her best customers, you know, Jimmy and I, and we got her to hide her red sparklers and not say anything about them for a day; then we hiked straight back to the campus and cleaned up! Why, looky! Jimmy and I own nearly all the agates in school—rare specimens and all! Show 'em yours, Jimmy!"

Jimmy made no move to display his marbles. He found the eyes of his father fixed upon him.

"Whose idea was it to have the new marbles held back?" asked J. Rufus ponderously.

"It was my idea," stated Jimmy calmly. "That's what the trouble was about." He did not glance at his mother.

"Well, of all things!" exploded Violet Bonnie. "What kind of fatheads does old Wizen want in his school? Don't he want to train live, progressive American citizens? Why, that's the brainiest trick I ever heard of! Why—" At that moment she observed Blackie making frantic signals to her, and stopped abruptly.

"Professor Wizen was quite right," declared Wallingford, with more than parental severity; it was judgelike. "The transaction was not straight."

Young Jimmy rose. He was a handsome boy, perfect of body and feature except for his lobeless ears, the rims of which came down in a long tangent upon his oval cheeks. He squared his shoulders.

"I don't see why it isn't straight for a

boy if it is for a man," he objected. "You showed me how to get these marbles," and jerking a handful from his pocket, he held them out toward his father. "Only last week I heard you tell Daddy Blackie about a man who sold his railroad before anybody else could find out that the price would go down. You laughed about it, you and Daddy Blackie—both. You said he was a smart man." Jimmy was looking his father steadily in the eye.

"That's right!" put in Toad, also looking Wallingford steadily in the eye. "What's the difference?"

"That's what I say, Jim Wallingford!" and Violet Bonnie snapped her vanity box at him as if it were a pistol. "Now, you tell them! I want to know myself."

There was a suppressed gurgle from Blackie Daw's niche between the clock and the statue, but when they looked in his direction, his face was perfectly sober and there was a crease between his brows.

Wallingford had half raised from the table. His round face had reddened, and, as he glared across at his son, he raised his heavy forefinger.

"Jim!" The cry was so commanding, so much at variance with the gentle speech of Fannie Wallingford, that they were all startled, even her husband. He turned to her quickly, and something that he saw caused him to pause, to falter, and to sit down. The angry color left his face.

Fannie Wallingford rose, a sudden revelation of quiet strength, and she was felt throughout that room. She walked across to the two boys, and put an arm around each of them and led them from the room. As they went out through the door, young Jimmy looked up at his mother from under his long lashes and his cheeks flushed. Suddenly he pressed close to her.

That night, Fannie and J. Rufus talked until far into the morning. After breakfast, Wallingford, with a grave and thoughtful face, strolled across his beautiful Tarryville grounds to the house of his partner and neighbor, Daw.

"Blackie, that phony cotton-plantation deal is off," he soberly announced.

"Fine!" promptly acquiesced Blackie. "They're the driest bunch I ever worked with. What's wrong?"

"It's crooked," stated Wallingford, with great solemnity. "I've decided to quit these more or less shady business trans-

actions, Blackie. Hereafter, I go in for nothing but clean, straight, legitimate enterprises."

Blackie Daw thrust out a long, thin hand. "Shake," he said earnestly. "I'm for it! Why, Jim, ever since I was a kid, I've wanted to be honest—some day!"

II

"Do you feel like a boob, Jim? I do," grinned Blackie Daw, his long legs cocked on Wallingford's desk in their openly acknowledged down-town office, and his cigarette dangling conveniently over the wastebasket. "I'm afraid to go to a hotel for fear I might blow out the gas."

"It's our own fault," considered Wallingford. "Only simps advertise that they have money for a legitimate business. Since we did that we've been so overrun with grafters, grifters, and gruffs, that it's a wonder the police don't get suspicious."

The door opened, and there came in a man almost as big as Wallingford, accompanied by another one almost as thin as Blackie Daw.

"I called in answer to your advertisement," stated the large man, who had thick lips and fat cheeks, and wore a collar so low that there was scarcely room in it for the buttonholes. "I hope you have not yet invested your money."

"You get your wish," returned Wallingford, with a cheerful grin at Blackie. The day's amusement was about to begin.

"You do well to be cautious," approved the large man, laying his broad-brimmed hat on the desk and hitching up his chair. The thin man sat down and said nothing. He looked as though he were perpetually smiling, but it was only a facial defect, like a squint. "No doubt you have had a great many glittering inducements offered to you."

"Bunches," agreed Wallingford. "Two gold bricks, a swamp-land scheme, and a wire-tapping game. What's yours?"

"Investigate and find out for yourself," rumbled the big man, and he threw a bank-book in front of Wallingford. "I'm Frank B. Tillory." He touched himself on the chest. "This is Henry Jenks. We're partners in the United Vegetable Company, and there's our cash capital, balanced yesterday afternoon." He opened the book and pointed to the figures. "Twenty-four thousand dollars and fifty-three cents."

and it confused his judgment. He found the same puzzled expression on Blackie's face.

"We don't need more money," declared Tillory, rubbing his knees. "We pay for our goods after they're sold. Our only expense at the start will be office and warehouse rents, the chartering of our ships, and the maintenance of our crews. Gentlemen, do you know the annual value of the fresh-vegetable trade of New York?"

"Millions," estimated Wallingford promptly. He was much interested.

"Millions!" repeated Mr. Tillory, almost smacking his thick lips with relish. He was a plain, ordinary, substantial man, who enjoyed working for a living. "That entire trade, gentlemen," and he swept his arm in a comprehensive circle, "will be ours!"

Blackie Daw uncrossed his long legs. He drew up to the desk, and touched it, for emphasis, with one lean forefinger.

"Who handles the money?" he wanted to know, and in his brow there was the crease of a regular business man.

"You do." Mr. Tillory's reply was so crisp and sharp as to be almost surly. "From the second you put up your fifty-thousand dollars you register your signature with mine at the bank, and no checks will be honored without both signatures."

Wallingford and Blackie looked at each other gravely, even solemnly. J. Rufus rose and pulled down his broad, white waistcoat.

"Gentlemen, you will excuse us for a moment," he requested, and, motioning to Blackie with a jerk of his thumb, he led the way into the adjoining room. At the door he turned swiftly and came back for a lead-pencil, but the maneuver was wasted. Mr. Tillory was showing Mr. Jenks some figures relative to the freightage on red beets, and on the countenance of Mr. Jenks there was that perpetual grin which was like a squint.

"Well," demanded J. Rufus, in the other room; "where's the trick?"

Blackie twirled his pointed mustache reflectively.

"I don't see any. It looks to me like a good, straight, legitimate business," and his face was as glum as if he had been calculating credits, discounts, and overhead expense all his life.

"I can't find any kinks," confessed Wallingford. "It's a good, hard, grubbing

proposition. We don't make a cent for five years, and then we go broke or get rich, like any other business man."

"That's the stuff!" Blackie was becoming enthusiastic. He lit a cigarette and blew a smoke-ring at the ceiling. "We build up a tremendous fortune on the pink radish, the sturdy onion, and the gentle turnip, and we end our days in precious peace. You don't suppose that a couple of hicks like those could hand us the ranikaboo, do you?"

"You talk like a nutcracker!" scorned Wallingford. "Don't I handle all the money?"

"Then that's off." Blackie felt that he must think a little longer. He creased his brows again and did it. "There's only one question left: Can we die rich at this game, or can't we?"

"Well, there's the Seaboard Fruit Company," replied Wallingford, showing his hands into his pockets and teetering on his toes. "It started with a borrowed steamboat and one banana. Now it owns the biggest fleet on the Atlantic and all the fruit east of the Mississippi." He withdrew his hands from his pockets, and, sticking his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, tapped himself on the chest with his thick fingers. "To-day, Blackie, the Seaboard Fruit Company is worth fifty-million dollars!"

"Fifty-million dollars!" Blackie Daw threw back his head and filled the chandelier with cigarette smoke. "Jim, an honest, working lollipop has it all over us! Let's go out and sign up!"

III

A BIG drayman clamped into the office of the United Vegetable Company with a box on his shoulder and a bill in his hand.

"Where do you want this?" he demanded of the two slaves who sat humped over their desks.

The heavy slave with the big diamond in his cravat looked up with a scowl, but the thin one with the black mustache was suave and pleasant.

"Just hold it till the boss comes in," he advised.

The drayman dropped the box on the floor with a thump, and shoved his bill in front of the heavy slave.

"Forty-five cents," he growled.

The heavy one handed him a dollar without looking up, and said,

"Get out!"

"Thanks," returned the drayman, with a grin. "You guys can be fresh with me all day at that price."

The first smile of the morning brightened the countenance of the heavy slave, and he turned to the thin one with a chuckle as the drayman went out.

"Blackie, how do you like being a business man?" he inquired.

"Well, Jim," considered Blackie carefully, "I understand, now, why so many business men prefer jail; and if we weren't to start on that trip aboard the Orijaba this afternoon, I'd throw up my job."

Wallingford rose from his desk and went to the door of the dingy little office. The big, dim warehouse was empty. He came back and sat on the edge of Blackie's desk.

"Do you feel like a boob?" he wanted to know.

Blackie had bought himself black-rimmed eye-glasses with plain lenses, as a part of his business equipment, and, on the second day, he had removed the lenses because they bothered him. Now, he removed the frame from his nose, and let the black circles dangle on their black cord.

"Yes, I feel like a boob," he acknowledged, "but I don't know why."

"I guess it's because every square business man is more or less of a simp," judged Wallingford. "We've been two weeks without handling a bean in this rotten cell, and I haven't seen a move that looked like a foxy play. Yet I'm as suspicious as a wealthy old maid."

They were both silent for a while.

"Same here," said Blackie, finally. "Say, Jim, Tillory and Jenks seem to go to this drudge thing like a fire in a garage. They don't mind that we're taking that Southern cruise in their places."

"No," slowly agreed Wallingford; "they're tickled about it."

The two men looked at each other soberly.

"I suppose we've been gunning for the fall-guys so long that, now we're in an honest business, we're hungry to find something crooked," surmised Blackie.

"Just from force of habit," supplemented Wallingford, and went back to his desk.

Tillory and Jenks came in presently. They walked with brisk strides, and Tillory wore his hat on the back of his head to show that he was in a hurry.

"Well, boys, I'm ready now for our business," announced Tillory heartily. "I'll need two checks, Wallingford; the ten thousand bonus for the steamship company and ten thousand dollars for my petty-cash account."

Wallingford drew a check-book from his desk and tossed out the two vouchers in question, already filled in and signed with his own name as treasurer.

"You don't want a few checks signed in blank?" he suggested.

Blackie thought Wallingford seemed almost hopeful that Tillory would say "yes," but Tillory said nothing of the sort. He only rubbed his hands together briskly.



"Thanks," returned the drayman, with a grin. "You guys can be fresh with me all day at that price"

"Wouldn't have an earthly use for them," he declared. "If this ten thousand doesn't last me until we begin shipping vegetables into this warehouse, we'd better ask for my resignation. Now let's look over your route-sheet."

Together the four of them pored over the Southern cruise which Blackie and Wallingford were to take for the purpose of turning those optional contracts into binding ones; and there ensued two hours of solid, substantial business talk, in which Blackie Daw put on and took off his eyeglass frames a hundred times, and glanced wistfully, fully as often, at his saxophone case, his binocular case, and his camera case. It was he who, at two o'clock, announced the hour in a voice which was almost a cheer.

"Time to start down to the boat!" he proclaimed, and began to pick up his particularly personal luggage. He was as happy as a boy, and he was distressed to note that Jim Wallingford's face had grown more and more glum as the time came for departure.

The four of them were just climbing in the big touring car when Wallingford suddenly turned to Tillory.

"By the way, old man, I'd like a couple of checks signed in blank, myself," he said. "I might get stuck down there."

There was only an instant of hesitation on Tillory's part, during which the thin and gangling Jenks looked at him with that never-changing smile.

"Certainly," agreed Tillory, jumping to the ground. "Wouldn't you rather have them for specific amounts—say a thousand or so each; say one for two thousand, and one for three thousand?"

"Oh, no," refused Wallingford carelessly. "I'm more likely to want them for even smaller sums—getaway checks, you know. You'd better give me four or five."

Tillory turned as if he were about to look at Wallingford, but he did not complete the movement. Instead, he strode into the office, signed five blank checks on the Farmers' and Shippers' Bank, and gave them to Wallingford.

IV

THE Orijaba was well out in the bay, when Wallingford, sitting on the palm-embellished after-deck with Fannie and

Violet Bonnie and the two boys, was struck by a painful idea. Jumping up, he located the sad, sweet strains of "Home, Sweet Home," floating down from the bridge, where Blackie sat curled around his saxophone.

"Come down here, quick!" ordered Wallingford.

Blackie only looked at him with mournful eyes, and went on with his parting dirge.

There was only one course left open to Wallingford. He jerked the saxophone out of the musician's hands, and Blackie followed to the boat-deck, his entire artistic nature outraged.

"We're done!" exclaimed J. Rufus, and there were big drops of perspiration on his forehead.

"Then what's the use of fussing?" objected Blackie, reaching for his saxophone.

"I tell you we lose our fifty thousand dollars!" ranted Wallingford. His fists were clenched, and his face was red.

"Suppose we do," argued Blackie, glancing up at the bridge, where the gray-whiskered captain stood grinning down at him. "The trip's worth it!"

"It isn't worth the ache of knowing you're a boob," insisted Wallingford.

"I've got over worse," calmly responded Blackie. "Now, Jim, I'll make a bargain with you. Let me finish my getaway music, and then I'll listen to your sad story."

"Don't you care that you're being skinned!" Wallingford almost yelled.

"Not while I'm happy," retorted Blackie. "This trip just hits me where I live. To sail away into Southern seas, to bask in the beautiful Southern sunshine—"

"Take it, you fool!" growled Wallingford, and handed him the instrument.

He paced the boat-deck until the last possible lugubrious note had been extracted from "Home, Sweet Home," and then Blackie rejoined him, with his saxophone under his arm and the gray-whiskered captain grinning down at him from the bridge.

"Shoot," invited Blackie, seating himself at the base of the funnel.

"I've figured it all out," said Wallingford. "It was framed up to make us want to come on this trip, so we would be out of reach while Tillory and Jenks do a fade-away with our bank-roll!"

"A tin dipper makes your kind of a noise," scorned Blackie, abstractedly fingering at the keys of his saxophone. He was trying to remember an especially



"Don't you think it would be more in keeping, Jim, if we climbed through a window?"
whispered Blackie, as Wallingford fumbled with the lock

mournful strain from one of the sentimental songs of his boyhood. "Why, Jim, this is a clean, legitimate business we're in. It's as straight as a string-bean, as solid as a squash, and as reliable as a potato. Now, my gloomy friend, listen to reason. How can Tillory and Jenks scoop out the United Vegetable Company's bank-roll without committing forgery or using a jimmy? They can't draw checks without your signature, and Tillory refused to accept checks signed in blank."

"He don't need them, I tell you," impatiently explained Wallingford. "My signature was registered at the bank on the tenth. It took effect on that date. But checks signed before that period by Tillory, Treasurer, and Jenks, Secretary, will be honored, no matter when they come in. All they have to do is to date them back."

Blackie was silent for a long time, and the creases he had cultivated for the past two weeks were real this time. Presently the frown disappeared, and he laughed.

"Nothing doing, Jim," he decided. "All those fellows want is a corner on cabbage. They're not going to run the risk of a pinch for a piking fifty thousand now, when they can be in on a fifty-million split-up after their teeth drop out."

"I have a hunch," declared Wallingford, and, hurrying up to the bridge, he requested the captain to hail a tug.

"What are you going to do?" asked Blackie, following him.

"Send on the girls and the kids to wait for us at Norfolk. We're going to sneak back to the city. Do you realize, Blackie, that we're sailing out of New York harbor and our money's back in the Farmers' and Shippers' Bank? No wonder business men turn gray!"

V

THE nearer they drew to the warehouse of the United Vegetable Company, the more impatient Wallingford became, and,

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as the taxi stopped at the door of the be-draggled old building, in the queer-smelling street down by the docks, Wallingford jumped out and ran up the steps.

"Don't you think it would be more in keeping, Jim, if we climbed through a window?" whispered Blackie, as Wallingford fumbled with the lock, but J. Rufus only scowled at him. His hunch had grown into an obsession.

He turned on the lights as soon as he was in the office, and made straight for the new safe; nor did he pay any attention to Blackie's flippant remarks about burglary as he twirled at the knob. He threw open the heavy doors and pulled out the check-book; then he opened the little drawer, and gave a sigh of satisfaction. The two checks he had signed were still there, as was the bank-book! No checks had been extracted from the check-book since his five had been torn out. He leafed back through the stubs. The amounts drawn prior to the tenth of the month were all small, and they agreed perfectly with the balance which he had requested that morning. The United Vegetable Company still had seventy-three thousand four hundred and fifty-seven dollars and twenty-four cents to its credit at the Farmers' and Shippers' Bank.

"Now I suppose you'll tuck that hunch of yours away in a satin-lined box and chuck it in a well," chided Blackie, who had been looking over Wallingford's shoulder during this earnest search.

"This doesn't prove anything," retorted Wallingford. "Just because none of these fancy-printed checks are missing is no sign that plain blanks couldn't have been used. The Farmers' and Shippers' don't have to see a tomato and two open pea-pods before they'll pay out any money."

Blackie offered his partner a cigarette.

"Be calm, Jim," he recommended. "If you expect to become a regular business man, you'll have to overcome your suspicious nature. Remember that all commerce is founded on trust, and all wealth on confidence."

"So is graft!" snapped Wallingford. He pinched the bridge of his nose between his thumb and forefinger and thought a long, long time; then he took a survey of the office, his eyes roving inquiringly everywhere.

The room was as it should be. It seemed scarcely to have been disturbed,

except that Tillory's light overcoat was gone. He had not worn it to the boat. The papers on Tillory's desk were straightened, too. One or both of the men had been there. J. Rufus examined the papers on Tillory's desk and then those on Jenks'. Blackie, watching Wallingford's abstraction, at first idly and then curiously, at last became interested himself, and taking up Tillory's waste-basket, emptied the contents on his own desk.

"Jim, what did you say our bank-balance was?" he presently inquired, looking up from a crumpled slip of paper he held in his hand.

"Seven-three-four-five-seven-two-four," J. Rufus answered, consulting the back of a card he had stuck in his vest pocket.

Blackie laid the slip of paper before Jim, and pointed to those same figures in the upper right-hand corner. There were other figures, and they were all significant.

"I have a hunch myself," he finally admitted. "Jim, we need a drink."

VI

AROUND NOON the next day, Wallingford and Blackie sauntered into the office of the United Vegetable Company and observed with great amusement the suddenly dropping jaws of Tillory and Jenks.

"Hello, boys!" hailed Wallingford happily, and, for the first time in their acquaintance, he saw Jenks without his perpetual grin. There was a white ring around the space it usually occupied.

"Why—why, I thought you were off the Virginia coast by this time!" faltered Tillory, and wiped his thick lips. They had suddenly become overmoist.

"We had a little private business and came back," returned Wallingford airily. He was particularly jovial today, fresh and clean-looking, and his round, pink face fairly radiated good cheer.

Tillory had swiftly regained control of himself, and now he became very indignant.

"You've no right to neglect business in this way!" he charged. "Those optional contracts will begin to expire before—"

"Don't worry," interrupted Wallingford. "We'll jump on a train and beat that boat to wherever it's going at any-time in the next two weeks."

He sat down comfortably in his swivel-



DRAWN BY CHARLES E. CHAMBERS

He gripped Jenks' wrist with a sudden, fierce twist, and the next minute he was slipping
a steel-blue revolver into his own hip pocket

chair, but he turned it face outward. He lit a big black cigar and folded his hands across his knee. Mr. Tillory and Mr. Jenks looked at their watches simultaneously. Blackie Daw sat on the corner of his desk, facing outward, and whistled "The Wearing of the Green."

A long silence ensued. Mr. Jenks looked at his watch again; then he looked at Mr. Tillory and received a nod. He rose, put on his hat, and moved toward the door. He found Blackie there before him.

"Wait a few minutes, Jenksy," requested Blackie, with great suavity, and closing the door, he stood with his back against it.

The perpetual grin of Mr. Jenks at last explained itself. It had covered a perpetual snarl.

"What do you mean by this?" he demanded.

"That you'll either sit down and be good, or I'll step on your face," Blackie informed him.

Jenks made a swift movement toward his hip pocket, but there were few thin men as swift as Blackie. He gripped Jenks' wrist with a sudden, fierce twist, and the next minute he was slipping a steel-blue revolver into his own hip pocket.

"Now I know I can lick you," grinned Blackie. "I can slap the features off any man that totes a gun. Will you walk to your chair, or shall I boot you?"

At that moment the telephone-bell rang. It seemed unusually loud. It filled the room with its clatter. Tillory grabbed the 'phone. Jenks half turned, with again that curious white line around his lips. Wallingford stopped swinging his feet. Blackie Daw stood still with his back to the door.

"Yes," said Tillory, into the 'phone, "yes—yes—yes—*what!*" He dropped the receiver and turned chalk-pale; then the color flooded back to his pendulous cheeks as he wheeled to confront Wallingford.

"Where's that money?" he roared.

"What's the matter?" mocked the even voice of Wallingford. "Has your note dropped in for collection?"

Henry Jenks suddenly sprang before Wallingford in a startling frenzy. His fists were clenched; his eyeballs were glaring, and he gnashed his teeth.

The next adventure of *Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford* will appear in the August issue.

"Where's that money? Where's that money? Where's that money?" he screamed over and over.

Wallingford shrank back from the man, for Jenks was uncanny; but Blackie, without ceremony, pushed the fellow into a chair.

"The money's planted, you cheap grafters," Blackie taunted them. "We had it out to the last cent two minutes after the Farmers' and Shippers' Bank opened its doors this morning. We've tucked our fifty-thousand away for safe-keeping, but we'll spend your twenty-three thousand on our Southern cruise."

Tillory sprang from his chair.

"You'll never get by with that!" he yelled, and slammed the telephone-receiver on the hook, keeping his hand on it as if to use the 'phone as soon as the connection had been broken. "I'll have you pinched for grand larceny!"

"Try it!" Wallingford rose, and his lips curled. "Try it, and I'll make you wear a short hair-cut for the rest of your life. I've issued a warrant for that note as evidence. It's a skin game on the face of it. You issued a six-per cent. note for seventy-thousand dollars to a confederate two months ago, on the chance that you could find a sucker in that time. You signed it the 'United Vegetable Company, per Tillory, Treasurer, and Jenks, Secretary'; but you didn't include it in your list of liabilities when we bought in. Now, take your cap-sule," and Wallingford started for the door.

Tillory and Jenks both rushed for him, the latter with a pair of shears in his hand. Blackie, who was a fine dancer, tripped Jenks by a deft swing of his foot, and sent the habitual smiler sprawling on the floor; then he rushed in front of Tillory.

"I hate to swat a fat man," he sang gaily, "but here goes," and he landed himself full-length in the midst of Tillory's surplus.

Blackie turned, chuckling, at the door. Jenks, scrambling to his feet, was limping toward his desk. Tillory had sunk into a chair, and, with his hands on the front of him, was gasping for his breath.

"Let this be a lesson to you!" warned Blackie solemnly. "Hereafter, tackle nothing but straight, legitimate business. Crookedness, my friends, don't pay!"



The Sins of the Fathers

By Virginia Verhune Van de Water
Illustrated by G. Patrick Nelson

Mrs. Van de Water's stories never fail to make a deep impression on all who read them. In them, the married or the to-be-married always find sound wisdom. All may learn from them—if they only will—some of the avoidable mistakes of married life. Often eyes are opened to the small things that make the trouble. But in this particular story there is a very big thing to be considered, a subject which is engaging the attention more and more of those who have the happiness and right future of the race at heart. It is a story especially for the to-be-married.

HER father should never have married. The old family physician had warned him of his duty a month before the wedding. The practitioner was ahead of his time in his ideas with regard to heredity and kindred subjects. He did not talk of eugenics—he had probably never heard the word. But when the young man went to see him, he told him the truth. Louis Duchesne twisted uncomfortably as he listened to the elderly man's frank opinion.

"I guess I'm in as good physical condition as my father was when he married my mother," he said. "And he lived until I was a grown man. He did not die young."

"No," said the doctor, "he did not. But your mother did."

Again the young man looked uncomfortable. "Oh, come, Doctor," he protested, "you do not mean to say that my father's

habits had anything to do with—with—what happened to my mother?"

There was an awkward silence before the physician answered.

"It is evident that your father never told you the truth, Lou, and perhaps if he were here he would not thank me for telling it to you now. Yes—your mother's health was affected by your father's excesses. It was that"—he hesitated a moment—"it was that which made her what she was for some months before and after your birth."

"What do you mean?" asked the son, paling slightly.

"I mean that her mind was affected and that she was wretchedly unhappy."

"My father never told me," muttered the young fellow.

"No; and I wouldn't now if it were not that you want to marry Helen Baldwin—and I am fond of the child. I was on hand

The Sins of the Fathers

when she was born," he added, trying to smile. "She comes of clean, old New England stock. I have always known her people, and I want to see her happy."

"Confound it, Doctor!" exclaimed Duchesne, springing to his feet. "I love her better than anything else in all the world! And I'll make her happy—on my word, I will!"

The gray-haired man laid a gentle hand on the younger one's shoulder. "I know you mean to, Lou, and I think you are willing to make some sacrifices for her—but I wish you loved her too much to marry her. Lad—you know the truth, now, and you also know that when you were at college you led a pretty fast life."

"Yes—I know I did," the other acknowledged, "but not after I met her. Since then—and that was three years ago—I have kept as straight as even you could wish."

"I believe it—but the taint is there, the taint that made your mother what she was. You know what your father died of?"

"Yes—locomotor ataxia. But that has nothing to do with this case. Good Lord, man, when a fellow means to live a clean life, and when his very salvation depends upon marrying the woman he loves, why need a meddling old physician who sees all the world through disease-spectacles attempt to ruin his life?"

Of course he married Helen Baldwin. That was a foregone conclusion. In fact, when he told her that he had made some mistakes when he was a very young man, but that she had saved him, she felt that, even if she did not love him—and she did, dearly—she would marry him to keep him good.

But all that had been a quarter of a century before the marriage of Helen Baldwin's daughter Constance to Lawrence Stanley. Constance Duchesne's parents had been dead for years when she became engaged to the handsome Yale chap whom she had known for a year. Her mother had been such an invalid that for several years before her death she had lived in what Constance's aunt Alice had told her little niece was a "resting-place for tired people." Here the child was occasionally taken by the devoted aunt to see her pale, languid mother. The invalid never talked much, but would smile wanly when her little girl kissed her. Once—the last time that Miss Alice Baldwin and Constance went to the "resting-place for

tired people"—the child heard her aunt inquire of the nurse, "Have the recent attacks been severe?" and the nurse murmured: "The last was the worst she has ever had. We fear for her heart." Later, the daughter remembered this, but it was not until her aunt told her that her "tired mother had gone to live with the angels," that she asked for an explanation of the sentences she had overheard. Then Miss Baldwin explained that her mother had sometimes had bad attacks of illness and that these were a strain on her heart. That was all Constance knew about the matter. That was all she must ever know, her aunt resolved, blushing, even now, in recalling some of the things that her only sister's physician had once tried to tell her.

"I prefer not to hear such details," she had declared primly. That was after her sister's crucial illness, while the young mother was slowly struggling back to what would never be health but was life of a kind. When Constance was only four years old, Louis Duchesne died suddenly. For a year after his death, Miss Alice Baldwin had kept her widowed sister in her home, with a trained nurse to care for her. Then it was decided that "it would be better for the patient to be taken to a rest-cure."

These circumstances, as she knew them, Constance Duchesne told Lawrence Stanley at the time of their engagement.

"You see," she said, "that but for Aunt Alice I should have had no motherly care at all. Auntie never married; perhaps if she had not had me to look after, she might have done so. She is, really, the only near relative I have except Uncle Paul—who lives up in Canada."

When Paul Baldwin heard that his niece was engaged, he wrote to his sister asking her if she really thought it best to allow the child to marry without knowing more about her family history—or, at least, without telling the plain facts to Constance's betrothed.

"You know I believe to a certain extent in heredity," he wrote, "and if the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children—as they seem to have been in the case of our poor sister's husband's family—would it not be fairer to tell this young Stanley the truth? Constance has in her veins the French blood that leads one to love pleasure and seek it, mingled with the austere Puri-

except to send Constance a check with which to purchase her own wedding present.

"As Alice herself is a Puritan, she thinks all other decent women are, too," he muttered.

tan strain that will make her suffer for any foolish actions she may thoughtlessly commit. That's a rather painful mixture, I guess. Then—you know how life treated our poor sister. Why not tell all this to Stanley? But, of course, my dear Alice, I leave this decision to you."

"I should hope you would!" muttered Alice Baldwin, as she read this letter one day, a few weeks before the wedding. Then, while she was still indignant, she took up her pen and replied.

"I am glad, my dear brother," she wrote, "that you leave all this matter to my better judgment—for, in this case, I am sure it is better than yours. I believe much more in environment than in heredity, and as our dear little niece is a niece and not a nephew, she will live a sheltered life. As to the sins of the fathers, I have always believed that text referred to bodily diseases, and you remember that Dickens suggests that 'the virtues of the mothers' are also visited on the children. Our Constance is like her mother, normal and—praise heaven!—a woman—therefore not subject to such temptations as they tell me men have. She has a right to her happiness. She is perfectly well and strong—so why should she not be a well and strong and happy wife and mother? Excuse me for mentioning these matters with such plainness, but you drive me to it."

When Paul Baldwin had read this effusion, he tore it into fragments, tossed these into the open fire, snorted impatiently, and washed his hands of the whole affair—

Oh, Larry dear, I do love to be loved!"

The most anxious of relatives could not have failed to be satisfied with the radiant happiness of the young wife's face as the bridal pair stopped to spend a day or two in Miss Alice Baldwin's home on their way to their new quarters in New York, in which city Lawrence Stanley was in business. Constance, smiling and merry, went from room to room of the old house, indicating to her indulgent relative certain bits of furniture and favorite pictures which she would "love to have" in her own little apartment, if "auntie was sure—perfectly sure" that she would not mind.

"Mind!" echoed the elderly lady. "Why, my dear little girl, haven't I told you that I want you to take just what you wish? I shall feel happier for knowing that you have about you some of the things which belonged to your mother and also some of the things that have been mine."

The girl kissed her aunt rapturously. She had always been a little too demonstrative, Miss Baldwin reflected—not a bit like her self-contained mother. She supposed that Constance "took after" her father in this respect. Louis Duchesne had loved to



be petted and made much of. Perhaps this tendency in the child ought to have been checked when she was a little creature, but she had no mother to train her, and her caresses had been sweet to the lonely aunt. Ah, well, she reflected, with a sense of relief that swept away the thought of her own future loneliness, the child was safe now—married and happy! That was one blessing about girls: when they were once comfortably married to *good* men, there was no further need to be anxious about them.

Some such belief may have added an element of security to Lawrence Stanley's happiness during the first year of his married life. He, too, came of stern New England stock, but he felt that it was entirely proper for a woman to love her husband extravagantly, to find life with him perfect happiness. His mother was a self-contained woman with depths of feeling that made her son revere her. Yet, while he admired her deep and reticent nature, he glowed and expanded under such affection as his more demonstrative wife showered upon him. He loved her passionately, but not so blindly or foolishly that he could not see certain qualities in her character that might become grave defects if not kept within bounds. There was her excitable and over-trustful nature, for instance. It was beautiful and entirely proper for her to love her husband ecstatically; it would be permissible, perhaps, for her to show such excess of feeling to a child, if they ever had one. But he hoped she would not let herself care too much for any friends she might make, or take her pleasures and diversions too deeply, or be moved by any admiration she received.

He said this to her one evening, some months after their marriage. She was telling him of a luncheon that a friend of his had given to her, and of how good every one was to her.

"When I came away, Mrs. Danton put her arms around me and kissed me and said she was proud of me," she told him naively. "It is nice to have people say such things. I never heard such lovely remarks until I came to New York to live. Oh, Larry dear, I do love to be loved!"

He smiled indulgently at first, then became grave. "Don't like it too much, little girl," he advised her. "You know that fondness for admiration leads to a passion for it, and that ruins a woman's character.

It is also a mistake for a woman to let herself love many people."

"But I can't help their loving me!" she declared. "And if they do, why may I not be glad of it and return their feeling?"

She grew suddenly serious, and the man almost regretted his speech. She was so unsophisticated that it was hard to know just how to deal with her. He would not have her worldly wise; yet he must put her on her guard.

"Dearest," he said, "your own good feeling will tell you just how far to go in your friendships. You see, I am a New Englander, and my people have loved only a very few persons, and loved those deeply and calmly. We do not say much, or show our love by demonstration except"—with a laugh—"in the case of such an adorable little wife as I have."

She laughed, too, but there were tears in her eyes. The man wished that she did not "take things so hard." He must try gently but perseveringly to develop the solid, substantial side of her character and to teach her to curb her exuberance. He did not approve of excitable women. He was not used to them. Perhaps the French strain in her blood made Constance high-strung and mercurial. If she imagined that she had displeased him or made a mistake of any kind, she was almost too penitent. With this ability for keen regret of her misdoings, real or fancied, it should not be a difficult task to establish a normal equilibrium in her feelings after she became more accustomed to the life of a great city and to her own little home and the responsibilities attendant upon it.

Those nearest and dearest to young and unsophisticated wives do not suspect the experiences that come to them when they first enter the society that makes much of them. Lawrence, watching the admiration which his wife received, did not know that, at first, it was excitingly sweet to her, or that, after an evening spent in gaiety, she felt the reaction peculiar to sensitive and high-strung natures. She would reproach herself when alone, because she had felt a thrill of gratified vanity when people looked admiringly at her. Each time that her husband warned her against too great absorption in society, she would feel an added pang of conscience. And all the while Lawrence Stanley, secure in a healthy body with a well-balanced and sane mind, thought his

wife was happy. He did not quite approve of the fact that one man—a handsome bachelor—called oftener than did other men, but he refrained from uttering any comment, telling himself that Constance would do the proper thing. When, a few weeks later, he noticed that she shunned this man's society, he flattered himself that he had been right, that his wife would never allow any man's attentions to become marked. Could he have known what led to the sudden cessation of the friendship between the young wife and the man, whom she really liked, he would have opened his handsome eyes in shocked surprise.

To a woman of the world the occurrence would have seemed a trifle, a matter to be laughed about. But to Constance it was a self-revelation. She had taken the liking of the man in question as a matter of course, until one afternoon—her "at-home" day—he outstayed the other guests. It was dusk when he arose to go. Constance started to turn on the lights, but he checked her.

"Don't bother to do that," he said; "I am going at once. By the way, I start for Chicago to-morrow and shall be away for at least ten days, so I shall not see you for another fortnight."

She had a sensation of regret, for she liked this agreeable friend.

"Good-by," he said, holding out his hand. She placed hers in it, and he grasped it closely, gazing into her eyes. For a moment there stole over her a sense of distinct pleasure in this man's hand-clasp, and she raised her eyes to his and smiled. He smiled, too, and said softly: "I like to think that you will miss me, little girl. Good-by!"

She stood where he had left her after he had gone, her hand still warm from his clasp, a half-smile on her lips as she recalled the look in his eyes. How good it was to know that he cared so much!

Then, like an icy wave, there rushed over her all the traditions of her Puritan ancestry and training, and she turned cold with horror. She, a married woman, had been glad to have another man than her husband hold her hand; she knew that she would possibly have continued to smile if this man had kissed her. For the space of a single breath she had thought that he was going to kiss her—had almost hoped he would! She—Lawrence Stanley's wife, who had vowed before God and man to be true—she had had this sin in her heart! She tried to shake off

the terror in the thought that, after all, she had done no wrong. What was there in letting a man hold her hand a little longer than was necessary? But her reasoning failed her, and she remembered a text that she had heard quoted often by her aunt: "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." With it, she remembered a verse from the New Testament. "Whosoever looketh on a woman," she whispered, but she did not dare finish the line. With a shudder of self-loathing, she ran through the hall to her own room, locked the door, and, flinging herself on her knees by her bed, prayed wildly for pardon. All through the hours of that night she lay, thinking of herself as a sinner. Lawrence must never know. She would feel easier if she could confess to him, but a part of her punishment must be that she was to bear the knowledge of the sin in her heart alone.

Paul Baldwin was right when he wrote that the blend of French and Puritan blood was sometimes a rather painful mixture. A normal, well-poised woman could not understand the sufferings of Constance Stanley.

Gradually she let society and its claims slip and took up church and charitable work. When she felt one of her periods of despondency and fear coming on, she would go to see some sick person, telling herself that such work might, perhaps, be counted to her for righteousness and bring her peace of mind. And all the while, her husband, thinking he saw all, saw nothing. He was only a practical, self-sufficient husband—and how could he know?

Yet, by the time that a year had passed, Lawrence Stanley understood that to call his wife's attention to her mistakes was to plunge her into the depths of such repentance as depressed her for hours at a time. Therefore he decided that the only way to make her less excitable was to keep himself very calm. He was glad to note that his wife talked less about her inward perturbations and her mistakes than when they were first married, and that she was acquiring a self-control that was admirable. He told her this, one night, as they sat together in their cozy living-room. He patted her hand approvingly as he talked.

"You are, like the little busy bee, 'improving every hour,'" he said, with affectionate pleasantries. "You used to be so excitable, so gushing, but now you control

yourself wonderfully well. You are mistress of your own feelings at last."

She looked at him with a startled expression.

"Please don't say that, Larry," she protested. "It makes me consider myself a hypocrite when I see what you think I am and what I really am *not*. I feel just as I did about lots of things, only I know you don't like me to show it. So I try not to. Yet, can one always help what one feels?"

She laughed with an hysterical catch in her voice. Her husband noted that her fingers were tightly interlocked, and he frowned slightly. It was evidently a mistake to talk to Constance about herself.

"Some one has said that we cannot all *feel* right, but that we can all *do* right," he replied sententiously. "If you persist in outward calmness, you will at last attain inward calmness."

"I see," she said. Her husband saw that she was trying to speak calmly and he tactfully changed the subject. After he had chatted with her for a while, he kissed her before going out for the evening stroll which he made a practise of taking before bedtime.

"Perhaps you would care to come with me?" he suggested.

"Oh, yes, I would!" she exclaimed; then she shook her head with a sudden change of mood. "But no," she added, "I think I will stay at home and read for a while—if you don't mind, Larry?"

"Of course I don't mind, little girl," he replied, wondering at the wistful look in her eyes. "I'll be back in a half-hour or so."

Going into her room she stood and listened as he closed the door behind him and while the elevator bore him down-stairs. Once she started as if to call him back, then held herself in check. She was alone in the apartment. Their one maid went home at night. Constance Stanley's husband did not know that she was afraid when she was alone after dark. That was one of the things she was trying to cure in herself—this silly fear. Sometimes it seemed as if she must sob it out to the man she loved, but then she remembered that he did not like emotional and nervous women. Well, she would conquer this weakness.

To-night, trying to hum to herself, she went across to her dressing-table and turned on the light above her head. She would take off her dinner-gown and put on a wrap-

per and read and forget her folly. As she looked in the glass, her own eyes, wide and dark, stared back at her. The hunted expression in them made her think of a trapped animal. She leaned forward as if hypnotized and stared at her reflected image. "I will look," she whispered hoarsely, "until those eyes stop glaring like that!"

She gazed long, her body tense and rigid. Then, little by little, so gradually that she scarcely seemed to move, she pressed more closely against the dressing-table, her face drawing nearer to the one in the mirror. At last, her forehead touched the cold glass, and she shrank back with a stifled cry, covering her face with her hands and cowering down in a chair, shuddering as in a hard chill.

"I can't change that look in those eyes!" she moaned. "What shall I do?"

Hastily, lest her courage completely fail her, she went into the bathroom and returned with a large bath-towel. With her eyes averted, she went to the dressing-table and threw the towel over the mirror. "Now," she muttered, "I won't see that face again!"

She undressed rapidly, shook down her hair and braided it, and slipped on a heavy wrapper over her nightgown. She did all these things with a frantic kind of haste. She knew that she was moving quickly that she might not have a chance to hear any of the noises that frightened her when she was alone. All at once she remembered that the hall window, opening on the fire-escape, was sometimes unlocked, and she ran out into the hall to make sure that it was secure. Not only did she look at the bolt to ascertain that it was fast but she tried to open the window. When she found that she could not do this, she drew a satisfied breath, but when she returned to her room, she paused on the threshold.

"I wonder," she whispered, "if it is really locked or if I only thought it was."

Again and again she tried the window, returned to her room, then went back to make sure that she had not been mistaken. She attempted to reason with herself.

"Even if it is unlocked, it is not likely that any one would come in that way," she muttered. But the picture evolved by the words filled her with a sudden panic, and once more she inspected the bolt. At last, with a powerful effort of her will, she returned to her own room and locked her



ILLUSTRATION BY G. PATRICK NELSON

She leaned forward as if hypnotized and stared at her reflected image. "I will look," she whispered hoarsely, "until those eyes stop glaring like that!"

door, then bolted the door leading into her husband's room from hers. Now, surely, she was safe and could try to read. Seating herself under the electric lamp, she fixed her eyes on the book before her, following line after line, page after page. She did not know what she was reading. She wondered what was the matter with her mind. Was she such a coward that she could think of nothing but her fears? If so, she was drilling herself to be brave by going through all this suffering to-night. Oh, if she could only tell Lawrence how she suffered!

The sound of his latch-key in the front door brought her to her feet, and she ran first to one door, then to the other, unlocking both, then snatched the towel swiftly from her mirror, tossed it into the closet, and was seated in her chair again when her husband entered the room.

"Still reading, eh?" he greeted her. "Well, your book may be very interesting, darling, but it is time you were in bed. You look pale and tired."

"I am tired," she said, with a sigh as of weariness. She rose to her feet, steadying herself by the arm of the chair when she felt her body swaying from weakness. Somehow, she thought, these frightened times took all her strength from her. When her husband went into his room, she put out her light and crept into bed. It was good to know that a great, strong man was within sound of her voice.

"Larry," she called, "before you go to bed will you see if the window on the fire-escape is bolted?"

"Yes," Lawrence replied, and she heard him walk out into the hall. "Of course it's fastened, Constance," he informed her. "It is seldom opened, anyway, and I bolted it myself only last night."

"Thank you," she replied quaveringly.

Her husband stopped at her door long enough to utter a gentle reproof.

"Darling," he suggested, "if I were in your place I would not let myself think about bolts, locks, and doors. Too many women are cowards. I like to think that my little wife is strong and brave, like my own dear mother."

What would he think if he knew?—Constance pondered. She drew the covers up about her shivering shoulders, and her conscience smote her at the thought that she was again deceiving her husband.

The average man does not understand

feminine psychology. Some physicians don't. There was nobody to tell poor Constance Stanley that her morbid fancies, of which she had grown to be afraid, were worse when she was overtired. So she kept busy, no matter how spent she was, in the hope of fighting off her fears, and the more she did this the more persistent they became. So pale and wan did she look when summer arrived, that her husband proposed that he and she take a trip of some weeks, journeying easily from place to place, up through New England. Except when she was on her wedding journey, Constance Stanley had never visited her husband's family.

"We will stay with mother for only a few days," said Lawrence, "for I think it will do you good to be where you do not have to meet people and be agreeable to them." He laughed as he said this. "Not that you can help being agreeable, you know—but, really, dearest, we both need rest. Do you appreciate that we have taken no vacation during the two and a half years we have been married?"

"I know we haven't," the woman replied listlessly.

Did she appreciate it! Had she not of late felt that she *must* get away somewhere, away from everybody—only, as she was afraid to be alone, how could she do it? But now Lawrence, who loved her and whom she loved, was going to take her out of this apartment, where there were such queer sounds and where there were always mirrors in which she saw her own strange eyes peering at her. She would try to forget all these things, try to forget that she was deceiving Lawrence, that she was a wicked woman, making believe to him that she was calm and satisfied and good, when all the time she was really frightened and unhappy and morose. What would he say to her if he knew all that she really was? Well, she would try not to think about it.

She made her preparations for departure with feverish eagerness. Her husband was not anxious about her. It was quite natural, he thought, that at present she should not feel as well as heretofore. He supposed that all women had these periods of depression. He was glad that Constance was so much less excitable than she used to be, so much less introspective. It would stand her in good stead during the coming months.

When in the Berkshires, Lawrence Stanley made an arrangement by which he secured an automobile for several weeks, and while he and his wife went from one beautiful town to another, the color came to Constance's face and she was more like the self of her girlish days than she had been for many months. On their way back from the mountains, the young couple spent a few days with Miss Alice Baldwin. The aunt was delighted at her darling's evident happiness.

"Lawrence is a good husband, isn't he, dearie?" she twittered. And Constance replied, "The best in the world, auntie."

The wife talked little of herself or her affairs here or at her mother-in-law's home. In the latter place, she made such a pleasant impression that Mrs. Stanley, Senior, urged her to linger on for a few days when the time came for Lawrence to return to the hot and noisy city. To this suggestion her husband agreed, saying that, although he must go to New York early in the week, he would return and spend Sunday with his mother and wife, taking the latter back home with him when he went.

The Stanley home was in Connecticut, and it was on the evening after her husband's departure that Constance heard mentioned for the first time in many years the name of the village in which was the "rest for tired people" where her mother had gone during her long period of invalidism, and where she had died. Miss Baldwin had always discouraged her niece when she made any reference to the place, but now, at the sound of the name, Constance's curiosity was stirred. Lawrence's brother from the West was at home for a month's vacation, and it was to him that the young wife turned.

"I used to hear of that village quite often," she said. "Is it near here?"

"Only about fifteen miles away," Stephen Stanley replied.

"There is a rest-cure home there, isn't there?" she inquired.

The man answered her so frankly that the questioner knew her manner had not betrayed her sudden interest.

"Call it a rest-cure, if you like," he said; "it is really an insane asylum."

The trio were seated on the veranda in the twilight—Mrs. Stanley, Senior; Stephen Stanley, and Constance—and nobody noticed the pause that followed this statement.

When Constance spoke again, it was with an almost indifferent manner.

"The mother of a friend of mine was there, years ago," she said slowly. "I was only a little girl then, but I went there once when I was visiting my friend. We went by train from Hartford—quite a long trip. As I remember it, it was a rather pretty place. I wonder if there are any of the same doctors there now that were there then." She paused. "I recollect," she continued reminiscently, "one nice doctor whom we liked. I doubt if he is there still."

"What was his name?" asked Stephen idly.

She waited, as if thinking, before replying. As she did so, she told herself that she was showing great skill in concealing her intense curiosity on the subject. "I think," she said colorlessly, "that his name was Hamilton."

"I believe I have heard that the senior consulting physician of the place is named Hamilton," observed her mother-in-law. "Perhaps he is the man you used to know."

"The man I knew was a rather young man when I was a child," Constance remarked, "though, of course, he seemed middle-aged to me. The buildings seemed huge to me then. I would rather like to see them again."

"As you have memories of the place as it was years ago," her brother-in-law said pleasantly, "perhaps you would like to motor over there with me some afternoon while you are here. It is a beautiful drive. Always supposing," he stipulated, "that the sight of an insane asylum does not affect you as unpleasantly as it does some people."

"It gives me the blues for days," declared his mother. But Constance laughed.

"Indeed, no!" she exclaimed. "It wouldn't depress me a bit, Stephen. In fact, while I have been doing church and charitable work in New York I have become interested in institutions—although I have not visited any of the insane asylums, yet. I shall be glad to have you take me over to what I still insist upon calling a rest-cure."

"All right," agreed Stephen; "if the weather's fine, we'll go to-morrow."

Thus it came about that, the following afternoon, Constance Stanley entered once more the place in which she had last seen her mother—the mother whom she now remembered as in a dream. The young wife's

manner was unperturbed, almost gay. Her brother-in-law noted her animation and was a little amused to find her more talkative than when her husband had been with her. He did not suspect that she had not slept all night but had held herself still while she pondered on what she had heard that evening. Surely the "rest-place" had changed its character since her childhood, for her mother had not been insane—only tired. She recalled how pale and ethereal the invalid had looked, and that she had never laughed. But she had been gentle and sweet.

During the night, Constance had rehearsed what she would tell Doctor Hamilton when she met him. She was anxious lest he might not be in his office to-day, and her face lighted when she learned that he was in and would see her. She sent in her card, aware that her name would convey no meaning to the man who had known her mother as Mrs. Duchesne. There was no gleam of recognition in the physician's face as he arose to meet her, but he smiled cordially at the pretty little woman who greeted him so pleasantly.

"You do not remember me," she said simply, "but I remember how kind you used to be to a little girl who was my friend and whose mother died here."

How smooth her voice sounded, and how evenly her words slipped out, one after another! Since this was the case, she would go on and tell the whole story as she had rehearsed it.

"I came here once with my friend and her aunt to see her mother," she continued. "That was many years ago, but I had a fancy that, as I was in this neighborhood on a little visit, I would like to meet you again, just to talk of those old friends of mine—the little girl, and her mother, your patient."

"Ah, yes! I am glad to meet you," the man said. "You are Mrs. Stanley, I see," glancing at her card which he still held. "And your friend's name?"

"Constance Duchesne," she said quickly. "Her mother was Mrs. Louis Duchesne."

"Ah, yes! I remember perfectly," he rejoined, his kindly face growing suddenly grave. "Mrs. Duchesne's was a very sad case, as you doubtless know."

"It was indeed," she murmured.

"I remember her especially well," he went on, "because she had everything to

live for, and her death was a cruel tragedy. In these days we call such things by their real names—and it was not only a tragedy but a crime."

Encouraged by his caller's interested attention, the physician talked on. He had known from the first that the case was hopeless, he said. "The sins of the fathers and the folly of the children," he remarked curtly. "Since the fathers sinned, the children should have remained single. That's a hard doctrine, but the greatest good to the greatest number, you know. One of the merciful things in this case was that the poor patient's baby—the one whose birth made her coming here necessary—died as soon as he was born."

"I did not know," faltered the woman, "that she had more than one child."

"Oh, yes," the physician informed her, too much flattered by her evident absorption in his story to be discreet. (Besides, he thought, the patient had been dead for the past twenty years and more.) "When her little daughter was several years old, another child was born—a boy, I believe. He died almost immediately. He was a monstrosity—a hideous creature, her physician told me. Not long after that, Mr. Duchesne died, and by that time his wife's malady had taken such a violent form that they brought her here. Her family hoped, against their belief, that we might cure her, but it was soon evident, even to them, that we could do nothing for her. Each of her attacks was worse than its predecessor. Finally, her heart failed—a blessed failure. What about her little girl, by the way? What became of her?"

"She died," said Constance slowly. Her lips felt stiff, yet she held her head erect.

"Ah—poor little thing! But what a blessing that she did not live to hand down the inherited curse. What—going so soon, Mrs. Stanley? I am glad you looked in upon me. Would you care to go over the buildings—or are you not interested in such things?"

"Oh, thank you, I am interested, but it is getting late and I must not keep my brother-in-law waiting," she replied, a little catch in her voice.

"I hope," the physician said solicitously, "that I have not shocked you with the sad details I have given you—but of course you knew most of them already."

"Of course I did," she affirmed. "It is



"I did not know," faltered the woman, "that she had more than one child." "Oh, yes," the physician informed her. "When her little daughter was several years old, another child was born—a boy, I believe. He died almost immediately."

very kind of you to let me talk of my old friends, whom, really, I scarcely remember."

"By the way," asked the man, as he walked with her toward the gate, where Stephen Stanley sat in his automobile, "you did not mention your maiden name. You say I knew you as a little girl?"

"But only as the companion of my little friend, Constance Duchesne," she said briefly. "Really, you never heard my name, anyway—so it is of no consequence now."

The man eyed her keenly as she hurried forward; then, as she stopped suddenly for an instant, a low exclamation of dismay escaped him. For she made a swift gesture with which he had once been painfully familiar—pressing her finger-tips hard against her eyes as if she would force back the eyeballs, then pressing the palms of her hands against her cheeks. The gesture was so swift that the physician had hardly

remarked it before it was over, but in that instant he seemed to see Helen Duchesne's peculiar action, and found himself listening for the hollow laugh that had always followed it and that was the invariable prelude to one of her violent fits of insanity.

"*My God!*" he ejaculated, but Constance Stanley had hastened on and was already climbing into the automobile by the time he reached her. She had not even waited for her brother-in-law to assist her.

"Don't bother about helping me in and out, Stephen," she commanded. And, as the physician paused at the side of the car, she said: "Doctor Hamilton, this is my brother, Mr. Stanley. Drive on, Stephen. I'm in a hurry to get home." Then, as the engine began to purr and throb, she nodded to the physician, and laughed suddenly, with a hollow sound that made her companion look at her, startled.

The Sins of the Fathers

"What's the matter, Constance? Tired?" he queried anxiously.

"A little bit, but not much," she assured him. Glancing back, she saw Doctor Hamilton standing where they had left him, gazing after the car.

"He looks as if he had seen a ghost," she muttered. But her brother-in-law was sounding his horn as they approached the public highway and did not hear her.

During the next three months, Constance Stanley went out little. She shrank from being seen on the street, and her husband considered this reluctance quite natural and proper. Moreover, the summer was hot, and it was as well, he thought, for her to keep quiet. In the evening, he would sometimes suggest her going for a stroll with him—unless the weather was damp, when he would go alone for his nocturnal walk. At such times she would slip into her room before he went out and cover the mirror. She would also glide out to the hall window to be sure that it was bolted. Her husband did not notice these things, or did he know that, as soon as he was gone, she shut herself into her room. She no longer tried to read but would walk up and down rapidly, almost breathlessly. Her chamber was a long one, and of late she had arranged the furniture so that her bed, dressing-bureau, and table were against the eastern wall—thus leaving a bare stretch down the western side of the room. Lawrence supposed she had placed the furniture thus to give an appearance of spaciousness. In this bare area she would walk when alone and nervous. After a few weeks she changed the walk to a half-run or trot across the floor and back. Again and again she would pause and press her fingers to her eyeballs, then her hands to her cheeks, and listen. When she heard nothing, she would laugh aloud and trot on again. She had found that she could not think when she was running.

One stormy evening in the early fall, she paused in her run and heard her husband returning, although he had started for his constitutional but a few minutes before. It was raining more heavily than he had expected, and he had decided to come back and abandon his stroll for that night. When the front door of the apartment slammed behind him as he entered, Constance hurriedly unlocked the two doors of her room, but not so quickly that he did

not hear the keys turning in the locks. He came straight into the room and found the towel hanging over the mirror.

"Constance!" he exclaimed. "What under the sun have you been doing?" For she was panting as if from violent exercise.

"I locked the doors because I wanted to undress," she explained lamely.

He looked at her sternly. "You have been overexerting yourself," he accused. "And what have you been doing with that towel? Why is it in front of the mirror?"

She glanced about swiftly as if she would hide from him. Then she pressed her fingertips hard against her eyes as if to shut out some vision that frightened her; then, with her palms against her cheeks, she threw back her head and laughed aloud. Her husband caught her by both wrists.

"Constance!" he commanded. "For heaven's sake behave yourself! You are acting like a crazy thing!"

She cowered away from him, her face buried in her hands, but suddenly drew herself together and stood upright.

"Excuse me," she said humbly, eyes downcast. "I lost control of my nerves for a moment. I will not be so silly again."

"I hope you will not," he replied firmly and severely. "A woman in your condition should not give way to such silly nervousness. It is a sin against yourself and even more of a sin against your unborn child."

She looked at him strangely. "My sin against my child?" she whispered.

"Yes, yours," he repeated, seeing that he was impressing her deeply. "What your child is depends entirely upon yourself."

He strode to the mirror and pulled the ridiculous towel away from it. "I suppose," he said, "that you have put this over your glass because it wounds your vanity to see yourself looking as you do now. Remember that you have had conferred upon you the greatest of human responsibilities, and bear it solemnly and gratefully."

He went into his room and his wife undressed. Then, as he wished her to sleep and he wanted to read, he closed the door between the rooms after he had seen her safely in bed. The wind had risen within the past hour, and he did not suspect that after he had finished his book and put out his light, the woman arose and began once more to walk up and down to keep from thinking. Lawrence Stanley had forgotten to open the door between the rooms, and if he



DRAWN BY G. PATRICK WHELAN

"Fool!" she shrieked. "You fool! Can't you see that it's a hideous monstrosity!
Mine—do you hear?—mine!"

heard any sound, he thought it was the wind sighing and moaning about the house. So low was his wife's recurrent mutter that he could scarcely have heard it if he had been in the room with her.

"A monstrosity! A hideous creature!" she was whispering over and over. "*My responsibility. Mine!* I must walk fast so that I cannot have time to think of what God is sending me. I dare not tell Lawrence—I dare not! I must run so that I can't think—but I must run very softly."

Two days later, Constance Stanley's little son was born.

"It is a beautiful baby," the nurse told the father, "but very weak and small."

It was late at night before the nurse dared sleep. The patient was quiet at last. The baby had been put in Stanley's room in the brass crib bought for him a month before by the hopeful father. Lawrence Stanley, in dressing-gown and slippers, lay down on the outside of his bed to get a little sleep, for he had not gone to bed the night before. The weary nurse lay down, too, on a couch in the young mother's room. She was a light sleeper and would snatch an occasional nap with one ear open for the nervous patient. But, as the hours wore away, the sick woman seemed very quiet, and the attendant breathed more easily. The autumn storm that had begun two days ago continued; the wind still blew, and the rain dashed against the windows. The sound was soothing, and the nurse closed her eyes after an inspection of her two charges.

The pale creature in the bed lay perfectly still for half an hour after the nurse had fallen asleep. Her own eyes were at first mere lines of brilliancy, so slowly did she lift her lids, but gradually they opened wider, until they seemed to glow in the semidarkness. Softly she slipped one white foot out from beneath the covers, then listened for a moment to the wind and rain. Both were helping her, she thought. Then she slipped out the other foot. At last she sank upon her hands and knees on the floor. Quietly, and with a snakelike motion, she crept swiftly into the other room. Still the nurse slept on, worn out. Still Lawrence Stanley slept on in the room with his new-born son. Nearer to the crib crept the mother. She must do this thing now, at once.

"*Before Larry finds out,*" she whispered, and, as she drew closer and closer to her child, she whispered the words faster and

faster. "*A hideous monstrosity! Hideous! Hideous! My responsibility! Before Larry knows!*"

The sibilant sentences echoed through the room. A sudden motion from the bed made her pause and gather herself together in the dark, ready for a spring. She did not know she could be so strong, but she arose to her feet and crouched like a tiger at the foot of the bed.

"Who's that?" demanded Lawrence, in a low voice. The sound startled the nurse, and she leaped to her feet, glancing with professional instinct at the bed.

"Mr. Stanley!" she exclaimed, running to the husband's door.

The room was suddenly flooded with brilliancy as the man pushed the button at the head of his bed, but as the light flashed out, the crazed creature crouching there threw herself with a scream, half anguish, half triumph, upon the sleeping baby in the crib. As her fingers closed on the tiny throat, the man, with a bound, was at her side and caught her in his arms, crushing her in his strong grasp. Straining back her head she looked into his face and laughed aloud.

"Fool!" she shrieked. "*You fool! Can't you see that it's a hideous monstrosity! Mine—do you hear?—mine! Hideous! Hideous! That's what God's given me!*"

Then, with a gasp, she sank into an unconscious heap at her husband's feet.

Constance Stanley's case was hopeless, all the specialists said. Puerperal mania the doctors called it at first. She never had another sane moment. But for her husband's prompt action, the nurse told the doctors, the child would have been killed by the crazed mother.

In writing of the tragedy to her brother, Miss Alice Baldwin spoke of it as "one of God's mysterious ways." Her tears fell fast as she gave an account of what had happened, but her sadness gave place to horror at her brother's reply.

"Don't lay this tragedy on the Almighty," he wrote. "We attribute too many of the devil's pranks and man's misdoings to him already. Put the blame where you like—but acquit him of such blasphemy as men make of their lives. Call it heredity, call it the result of the transgressions of nature's laws—call it what you will—but, as there is truth in heaven or earth, *don't call it God!*"

Barbara

This is the story of two men and a young and innocent girl. The men are well born and well educated, but they have no object in life except the pursuit of pleasure, and they give no thought to the harvest that is reaped upon their sowing. There are many such to be met with in the world. What matters it to them? However, in this instance it mattered a great deal to one of the men, and you will agree that his punishment was of the most terrible sort.

By Frances Aymar Mathews

Illustrated by George Gibbs

"NO, old man, few people do know it." The elder of two men sitting at a corner table in one of the ultrafashionable cafés of Paris was the speaker; he smiled a slow, reminiscent smile and stared deep into his glass of Chablis.

"You certainly stagger me," returned his companion. "Gould, you're about the last man I should accuse of having committed matrimony."

"Almost any other crime, eh?" Philip Gould laughed a little as he carefully refilled his guest's glass and his own.

"Well—not exactly that, but, you know, you and I have hunted together some, and the mere association"—Hugh Wayland's expression was almost comically ironical—"with me would not conduce materially to your standing in the paths that are straight."

"True. Ah, here is our *garçon*! Now it is to eat." Gould greeted the viands with a distinct relish.

"Drink and be merry," Wayland added, "for to-morrow—isn't that the old song?—we die!"

They laughed in concert.

They were two noticeable men. Neither was young, but Wayland was some five years the junior of the man who was his *vis-à-vis*—both expatriated Americans, not through any processes of law and order but self-exiled.

Being men of good standing and position, with no particularly obvious means of support, with large appetites for pleasure and excitement of all kinds, they had in-

evitably drifted to the continent of Europe early in the game, and had remained there.

They were freebooters, both—of the social variety.

Neither one had ever denied himself anything that he had ever wanted, no matter what it was, if by any means or methods he could get it.

And it is also an indisputable fact that each had been indulged to the top of his bent from his birth, and worshiped with the fool-worship some women give to their children.

Gould was handsome, strictly so, and, with his bold and ardent eyes, his quick smile, and agreeable talk, had experienced very small difficulty in putting himself through this world, so far, in very good shape.

Wayland was not so handsome, but his charm of manner was large; a certain deference, foreign to most of his countrymen, a certain plastic conclusion of his own, too, that he must and could please any one, had gone far as an asset in his scheme of existence.

For, to be sure, both these men had lived luxuriously for years on that floating and rather diversified capital commonly called their wits.

They were somewhat appeased now, and well along toward their dessert, when Wayland broke out.

"It certainly does get me that you've been a married man all this time, Gould!" He regarded his companion with frank curiosity.

Gould's hand was up, denyingly. "Only

for a year and a half," he said, adding with painstaking accuracy, "one year and ten months."

Wayland did not speak, but his fine and very impressive dark eyes were fixed upon the other man.

"Oh, it was years and years ago," Gould went on, "seventeen years!"

"By Jove!" Wayland exclaimed. "Then," he added, evidently computing things in his brain, "it must have been away back in '96 when you were in that Wiesbaden mix-up with the Russian duke and Cléo la Roze; she was his pal in those days."

"Just then and there. My boy, I've done very few decent things in my life, but I did make honest love to a girl then—yes, while I was playing as hazardous a game otherwise as a man can play and hope to escape imprisonment. I married the girl and was good to her—faithful to her." His voice was quiet and serious.

Wayland laughed. "Come now, don't!" he said reproachfully.

"Shut up! I was—until she died."

"Oh!" Wayland laid down his fork and refrained from more salad, as a tribute, not at all to death but because the word disturbed his sensations of personal comfort.

Gould went on. Once in a while a man of forty-eight does go on thinking aloud, without much of a care as to who may hear.

All his life he had held close and still—that is, all his life since, as a boy of twenty-one, he had forged his banker-father's name for a considerable amount, being shielded by his mother, who gave up her all, jewels included, and sent him to California for his health. He had had no confidants, no pals in any sense, except those necessary to the tricks of his trade.

But now his time had come to put something hitherto hidden into words. Wayland chanced to be on hand at the moment; so it was Wayland who heard.

"She died," he proceeded, sitting well forward on his chair, one elbow on the cloth and his jaw resting in his palm, "in Belgium, and she left me a child."

"What!" gasped Wayland.

It's curious, but in the environments of a certain type of man the mention of a child is regarded as something almost unmentionable.

Childhood has such scant meaning for them other than as a forgotten dream, that

had to be dreamed, it is true, but is best not interviewed until the hour of awakening from it has come.

He felt, somehow, rather vaguely that he must say something, because Gould made a dead halt.

So Wayland, brought face to face with childhood pure and simple for the first time in his life as a man, uttered the words, "Dead, too?"

Gould looked up quickly. "Not in the least," he said. "Very much alive," he smiled, "she is, too." He made an instinctive movement of his hand toward his inner pocket as he spoke.

"A girl?" Wayland ejaculated, in tones of increasing amazement.

"A girl—my daughter. She is sixteen years old," Gould said thoughtfully.

"Where do you keep her?" Wayland's puzzled and curious eyes, with their hint of mockery, were steadily upon his comrade.

"Safe," was the terse rejoinder.

"Safe," muttered Wayland, with a cynical smile. "Then, old man, she must be dead. No one is really safe in this rotten world."

"She is safe," the father of her returned very slowly. "Oh, I've been so careful!"

The eyes that he turned upon the other man were almost pathetic in their security and their intensity of purpose.

"She doesn't even know that I am her father." He said it with such a strange humility that even Wayland was silent.

"No, sir," Gould continued; "when the little mother died, a girl of eighteen only, herself, I just made it clear to myself that her child should have the right sort of a start. And that was something she couldn't get with my name, and me tacked on to her for a father."

"Umm!" Wayland ejaculated very assentingly.

"I arranged it all just so; and it's all come out as I planned. She's the happiest, merriest, most beautiful child the sun of God ever shone upon."

Hugh Wayland looked over at Philip Gould while his dark brows contracted.

The other man's mood disturbed and annoyed him. He would have preferred to get away from it. He had no resources to meet it with. He hated its influences, and combatted it in his innermost soul.

In some way, this marriage of Philip Gould's, and Philip Gould's daughter, vexed

him. It was undoubtedly all a discordant and alien note both in the two men's daily routine and in their habitual environments.

What could he say?

There was one thing germane to his composition that might be said: he said it. "She is beautiful, you tell me?"

"Very — exquisitely so. Like her mother. Great waves of golden hair to her knees, blue eyes, and a skin like silk and rose leaves."

"Take care of her," Wayland muttered. "She's grown up, you say?"

"Why, yes, I suppose she is. She is sixteen. I saw her last month—and she has gotten so tall, but very slim." He appeared to be mentally recalling the sight of her. "I don't see her often, and I contrive it so that none of her friends and school-mates or their parents shall ever see me."

"And she doesn't know you're her papa, eh?" Wayland laughed now. He was determined to kick off the unaccustomed and undesired strain.

Gould shook his head.

"She has her mother's maiden name. I am known there as John Philips."

"How in thunder did you manage the stunt?" inquired Wayland, with interest, "I mean, from the start."

"It wasn't difficult. First and last, it's been a convent in Antwerp. I took her there in my arms, a little kid, and there she's been ever since. I told them I was her father's



"Mother Claire-Marie talked to me, as she said, of serious matters"

lawyer, that both parents were dead in America, that no money was left, but that I became personally responsible for her and her maintenance, always. That was all. They don't ask too many questions."

"I see. Quite a romance." Wayland spoke conventionally, as he lighted his cigar.

Gould shook his head again as he struck his fusee.

"No, my boy; it's all nature and facts."

Wayland laughed a little, now, as he answered facetiously,

"Speaking of nature and so forth, what are you going to do with her now—that she's grown up and educated—finished, I suppose they call it, don't they?"

"I'm not clear, Hughie." The older man bent close across the little table now. "It must be because I'm phased for the first time in my career that I'm doing such a lot of talking to-night. I don't know what to do now."

"I fancied you didn't," was the response. "I don't see what you can do, unless she becomes a nun?"

"No!" Gould started back. "I'd not stand for that. Ah, she's so pretty, so fascinatingly lovely and good! Why, the whole world and all the joy it holds aren't fine enough for her! Hugh, I want her to be happy, don't you see? To have all the whole blooming big thing—society, friends, gaiety, money. I am making a pile for her; and then I want her to marry a nice chap—"

Wayland laughed grimly. "Are there any?"

"Sure. Take it from me, old fellow, there are a few white men left in the world. I want her to meet one, marry, have a home of her own, and little children, and live in the country."

Hugh Wayland stared in sickening astonishment at the man he thought he had known so well all these years. He pushed his plates and glasses away; the food and wine, merely to see, nauseated him. All this revelation and narrative of Philip Gould's failed to touch him other than into a species of revolt.

He felt all his own innermost tendencies and actions rising in lithe rebellion against what he termed "this sentimental damn-foolery."

He pulled himself together, however,

and, while trying to put the whole history behind him, he still had to say,

"And how are you going to do all this?"

"Not plain sailing yet, Hughie, but the mist's rising. In fact, in a letter I've just had from her, I think I see the way."

"Good luck to you!" Wayland exclaimed, in a relieved voice. Then he added, "By the way, apropos of letters, I had one this morning from Cléo la Roze."

Gould glanced up and frowned.

Wayland, then, had not had the fine perception to make even the least bridge of a pause in crossing from the convent girl to one of the most infamous women on the continent.

"And what is she up to now?" the older man inquired, after a pause of his own making.

Wayland lifted his shoulders.

"She's been over the sea," he said, as his face resumed its usual easy nonchalance.

"America?" asked Gould.

"South Argentina," Wayland nodded.

"Made good, I suppose."

"Very—piles of money. She has only been gone six months, too," was the reply.

"Had to get out, of course?" Gould asked.

"I dare say she had to, but of course she never admits that," he laughed lazily.

"No; she's made of iron." Gould smoked on.

He was thinking. Well, it was strange that this man with this particular type of woman under discussion was thinking this (he was wording it, of course, in his own mold): "How is it possible that my little girl and Cléo la Roze are both just women, that there is no other word than the one to call them both by?"

Wayland broke in upon this mental query of his companion by remarking in a casual tone,

"She's brought back diamonds with her, she says."

Philip Gould sat still for a moment. He picked up a knife and balanced it carefully on the rim of a bowl, and his expression was that of a man weighing some other things besides knife-blades. His features wavered in their lines, then became fixed and finally resolved. He said, leaning back in his seat again but with his fingers still on the knife,

"Did it ever occur to you to cut that sort out?"



DRAWN BY GEORGE CLINE

The man took it and violently urged it upon the girl, who at last drank it as
it was held to her lips

"What sort?" the younger man asked bluntly, almost defiantly, his full eyes staring.

"The Cléo la Roze sort, I mean," was the answer, made in a sober, serious way, as the speaker smoked on in leisurely fashion.

"No," was the reply, uttered in quite as serious a manner. "Cléo's all right. She goes slow, and she's quite a *diplomat*, after all; she will have no scandals attached to her name—"

Gould laughed in cynical derision as he interrupted,

"No, no open ones, I grant you, only the kind the grave closes over."

"As you please," Wayland smiled. "She's a deuced clever sort. She's never been investigated and says she never will be."

"Well, likely not—unless the political wheels turn the other way."

The music was burstingly furious just then, and a couple of dancers were whirling, skimming, shooting around between, under, over, on top of the tables. Conversation, perforce, ceased.

When the man and woman had returned to the stage, Wayland pulled a heavily scented envelope from his pocket. "She told me to ask you to come out to the château next week, too. Read it." He pushed the missive carelessly across the table.

Gould glanced over it, partly in a precarious and somewhat uninterested way. Wayland watched him as he turned the last page and scanned it more carefully.

Wayland said,

"Going?"

"Yes."

The older man replaced the sheet in its envelope decisively. His face was flushed, and his eyes had narrowed.

"Aren't you?" he inquired.

"Of course." Wayland took up Cléo la Roze's letter. "Wonder which of us'll reach first. I say!" he cried, with all the rapacious sporting instincts in him aroused by even the chance of a hazard; "don't tell me what day you're going. I won't tell you, either; bet you a hundred to ten I reach first."

"Taken," was the rejoinder, in a casual tone. "Go you ten better—a hundred to nothing."

Each man took out his book and made a note of the wager.

"By the way!"

It was Philip Gould who spoke, and he indicated Cléo la Roze's letter as he did so. "Is that girl she writes of a South American, a Buenos Aires girl?"

Wayland shook his head. "I do not know," he said, with a listless, dismissing laugh, as he stuck the heavily perfumed document in his pocket.

That night, or more correctly speaking, that morning about four o'clock, some three hours after Gould and Wayland had parted, the elder man, in his small but extremely luxurious apartment in the Cours la Reine, read another letter. This one:

Convent of St. Régis,
Rue de l'Harmonie,
Anvers, Sunday.

DEAR AND REVERED FOSTER-PAPA AND GUARD-
IAN:

First of all, it is to thank you for the large, large check. That was splendid; but my secondly is finer still—to thank you for the exquisite gowns you have sent me from Paris. And, what do you think? There was hardly any alteration necessary at all. Sister Ursule found that most remarkable, because I am so slender and quite tall. The green frock all glittering with those wonderful fringes of little pale pink shells and pearl ropes, and the girdle—it is ravishing! Let me tell you something. When it arrived on Tuesday, that was the fête-day of my Saint Barbara; well, it was so auspicious and grand for such a present to come just on that date. Mother Claire-Marie and Sister Ursule both thought it would be most beautiful to have that frock adorn the statue of the Blessed Virgin on that day; so, as I was more than glad to have such an honor and such a blessing on my frock, we put it on her, and, oh! she seemed to smile with pleasure at its beauty. Then, at midnight, we took it off and put it back in its *carton*, all tucked in with tissue-papers. And thirdly, the bonbons! So delicious, refreshing—oh, what a place Paris must be to make such sweets! The girls all enjoyed them with me. But I had one sorrow, I assure you. Mimi Barrows, you know, even if you have never seen her kind, good mama or herself, my chum, now, for three years; well, Mimi had to leave school two months ago in much haste—the demise of her adored grandpapa. Then she fell ill; then Mrs. Barrows wrote Mimi could not return this year to school, and I was desolated; so was Sister Ursule, who went immediately over to Mrs. Barrows' apartment in the Rue St. Joseph. It was nearly closed up, almost vacated, only one servant there, and he a newcomer—all he knew was that Mrs. Barrows had to go away on business of her late father's estate, that M'amzelle Mimi was also away. So there was no Mimi to help devour your bonbons, this time.

But—lend to me your ears, please, dear foster-papa—there arrives this morning a letter from Mrs. Barrows, also one from Mimi enclosed and

on the typewriter, all of which Mimi tells me she has learned to do. Well, these letters invite me to a visit at the country house of Mrs. Barrows, and as there will be guests and amusements, music, dancing, a dinner or two, and rides in auto-cars (think of this for me, who have never been in an auto-car yet), Sister Ursule says that your present of the three frocks and the large check comes as a direct apropos message from Saint Barbara herself, who watches over me always and who doubtless knew that the invitation was coming from Mrs. Barrows and Mimi.

It is for a fortnight. I am to go on Sunday next. Mother Claire-Marie considers it a very excellent and suitable circumstance for a young girl like me without mother or real father—you comprehend?—now that I am sixteen and of a tall build, quite grown up, to be at the house and under the chaperonage of Mrs. Barrows. For, oh, she is so kind and also charitable! You would not believe, only that, of course, I have written you from time to time, how generous she is in all her benefactions. Sister Ursule says, too, that her income, judging from her apartment and so forth, can be only a modest one. Still, she gives upon every occasion and without hesitation.

Now, behold what a long letter I am sending you, far away in beautiful Paris! When again shall I see you? Any sooner than before? It was last time six months, you recollect? But it won't be, I am sure, until I have returned from my visit to Mrs. Barrows and Mimi. Not until I have worn at the dinner or the *soirée*, whichever Mrs. Barrows thinks best, the adorable green frock of tissue with pink fringes, in which assuredly, as Sister Ursule says, I shall be blessed on account of the Blessed Virgin having first worn it.

And what do you suppose? This is most serious: Mother Claire-Marie sent for me to go to her room this morning and closed the door and talked to me, as she said of serious matters. What? Of marriage! Oh, yes, and instructed me that at Mrs. Barrows' it was not impossible that I should encounter some man of fine family and good character and fortune who would ask me to be his wife! And that as I did not wish to become a nun at all—

Oh, dear foster-papa, when one thinks of the wide world, and happy times, and music for dancing, and the opera, and such frocks as the pale-green one you sent; when one is a girl of sixteen, one does not sigh for the convent any more; one longs for society and such excellent persons of fine lineage and manners as one will meet at Mrs. Barrows'. You comprehend, I am sure, although you are not a girl who is eager to taste a piece of the world.

Well, to return; Mother Claire-Marie further said I must not be hasty, that I was too young to be married yet, that I must study the temperament of men and discover one that should be earnest and true. So I will. Ah! I will not be in a hurry. No. By and by when I have danced a little, laughed much—and been for some auto-rides, eh? Then, perhaps—you must not be afraid, as you always have been, for me to go in the motors, because I am positive Mrs. Barrows would not allow me to enter one when there should be the least danger. I salute you, dear foster-papa, with reverence and gratitude, and I am, as ever,

Your affectionate,

BARBARA.

Could read it to the end, with every appearance of care and interest—smiling a little occasionally, but, by the time he had attained the last lines, he was indisputably very much bored; he took Barbara's envelop from his desk and was slipping her missive in when the heavy odor of the other woman's sachet assailed his senses—faintly but unmistakably; he snatched up Barbara's note and drew it across his face. No! Pshaw! The insidious fragrance came from his own fingers; it had lingered there merely from his having held Cléo la Roze's epistle for a few moments, some two hours before.

But he tore Barbara's letter in bits, and also burned it to a thimbleful of gray dust, which he blew away with his breath—not a trace of it remained in sight, and even the film of its ash on the polish of his desk he brushed into oblivion with a sweep of his hand, the very hand which was still redolent of the ingratiating perfume of Cléo la Roze's odor-case.

Gould yawned then lazily, and threw himself still more at his ease in his armchair.

Barbara?

Oh, well; yes, to be sure. Circumstances in the shape of Mrs. Barrows (a good *bourgeois* soul, he took it, devoted to religion and the nuns) were occupying themselves very appositely with Barbara. She would doubtless marry. Certainly she would; he sat up a bit straighter to assure himself of this fact.

Then he sank back once more, and Barbara was quickly obliterated from his mind by thoughts and themes more closely allied to both his temperament and his habits.

He should motor out to the château on, say Sunday night, after a certain function at a certain studio in the Rue Fragonard. There would be *chemin-de-fer* there, of course, and he would likely win a pot of money. Wayland would not be there; he did not frequent that place. After the little game, he would start for Cléo la Roze's house, which he would reach somewhere between two and three A. M.—when mirth might be counted on to be at its climax.

He would win his bet with Hugh Wayland, for Hughie would not be apt to go before Monday evening.

With the subtle essence on his hand soothing his faculties, somewhat as if



DRAWN BY GEORGE GERO

Gould made one plunge down the stairs, one plunge into the midst of the maddest



revel, while they stared and stared and were silent—for a few seconds only

brewed by a Machiavelli, Gould actually fell asleep in his chair and did not waken until noon.

II

THE large touring car was before the door of St. Régis Convent. At many windows of the schoolrooms, peering from behind the shelter of white curtains, were children and young girls, with teachers in attendance, of course, watching for Barbara Fableau to start on her wonderful and fortunate holiday visit to Mrs. Barrows and Mimi.

The porter was placing Barbara's boxes, the large old one and the new small one containing, to be sure, the beautiful new gowns with the shoes and stockings to match and the hats and parasols and gloves, in the rumble. Mrs. Barrows, very sedately attired in a humble brown wool; with a large cloak and a motor-bonnet and goggles and veil, stood at the curb speaking with Mother Claire-Marie, assuring her that every care should be taken of "little Barbara," and that in two weeks to a minute, she should be fetched back from her holiday at the farm.

And was it a farm, then, where Mrs. Barrows lived now?

"To be sure." Mrs. Barrows took a card carefully from her bag and gave it to Mother Claire-Marie. "I had almost forgotten to give you my new exact address, in case you should wish to communicate with the dear child. I have removed from the apartment in the Rue St. Joseph entirely, yes, and taken up a residence in the small property bequeathed to me by my father, you see, *madame?*"

Mother Claire-Marie, also Sister Ursule read the engraved card: "Mrs. R. L. Barrows, Farm Villa, Deaumont-sur-Scheldt."

But Deaumont-sur-Scheldt! The birthplace of Sister Ursule! Forty miles or more, only, from Antwerp! The villa? "Could it be the white handsome little house on a hill with a grove of poplars and a bridge crossing the driveway over the brook?" exclaimed Sister Ursule.

"The very same," Mrs. Barrows nodded.

"Ah, but that is a pleasing thought, although, it is true, it is thirty years since I have seen Deaumont-sur-Scheldt," Sister Ursule sighed.

"It is unchanged, I assure you. Now, Barbara is quite ready?"

Barbara was entirely ready.

Mother Claire-Marie herself tucked the blankets around their feet, assisted by Sister Ursule, watched by the bobbing young heads at the windows of the schoolrooms above.

Barbara cried out breathlessly,

"Ah, dear Sister Ursule, think of it! I am in a motor-car *en route* to happiness. Be sure to pray for me, please, dear Mother Claire-Marie; and oh, what will I not have to tell you when I come home!"

The chauffeur touched the lever; there were whirrings and whizzings, and the long, warning whistle of the horn at some gaping passers-by. Barbara was off.

Mother Claire-Marie and Sister Ursule stood watching the big car swing around the corner, past the wooden *memorare*, where the little oil-lamp always burned, when the wheels of the car almost grazed a woman and child who were kneeling before it.

The two watching grasped each other's hands in affright, not for the risk to the kneeling figures but, as Mother Claire-Marie whispered,

"Barbara forgot to bow her head as she passed the shrine, Sister Ursule!"

"Ah, but Reverend Mother, the good God, he will also forget that she did not do it! I am sure he will. The dear child!"

And both the religious went back into their convent, and the nun at the door closed and barred it.

"Forty miles!"

Barbara had never in her life been further from the Convent of St. Régis than three miles out in the country to another convent, Our Lady of the Palms, and only once there for a Christmas treat to visit the *crèche*; and that was so long ago, when she was only five, that most of its detail was lost in the retrospect.

"Forty miles!"

But they were going fast! The sky and the land, the rivers, hills, meadows flew past them all so quickly, so pinned together as to soon make them indistinguishable and dizzying.

And here, at this inn, they would stop for luncheon.

And further on, flying faster all the

while and faster, they would stop for the customs inspection.

And were there customs inspectors from one portion of Belgium to another?

To be sure there were.

And on the other side of the customs office they could go faster still.

Ah, soon they would reach Farm Villa and Mimi!

But here something desolating must be told by Mimi's mama.

Mimi had been ill again; had had, the doctors said, to go to Baden for the cure. She would be back in a week. Ah, yes, to be sure! But, how unfortunate! Yes, Mimi herself was grieved so deeply, but what could be done? Alas! Illness must be endured. Mimi left a load of love for her very dear Barbara and that she must amuse herself.

To be sure, there would be one or two other young girls, Mimi's friends, too, and plenty of gay society for Barbara. Even that night, being Sunday and a feast-day, there would be guests for dinner, at eight o'clock, and a little dancing afterward. Mrs. Barrows wanted to do all the little she could to distract and please Mimi's schoolmate.

They would arrive in ample time, to be sure. Had they not been traveling, now, since ten o'clock?

Forty miles did not take forever to go.

When the mist was creeping up over the meadows from the river that is called the Seine; when the little boats were whistling softly and shrilly to each other; when the shadows under the stone bridges were deep and dark; when the big draft-horses were being unharnessed from the wagons and led to drink; when the first stars showed in the blue; when the breeze blew cool and even frosty in their faces; when the road they traveled widened, spreading smooth and straight like an oily snake before them; when the poplars leaned together in the park they entered; when the owls sang sadly in the branches and hooted from the belfry of a little church—then Barbara saw shining, yonder, in the midst of the gloom, a large house full of windows, and in each window a globe of splendid light shining through rich curtains.

As they neared it by a winding drive-way, now seeing it, now not; then again catching a glimpse, even, of the great front door, open wide and letting out such a

flood of yellow radiance as made Barbara exclaim,

"Oh, what palace is this, Mrs. Barrows?"

And Mrs. Barrows, laughing indulgently, answered, "No palace at all, my dear, this is my little Farm Villa."

"But so immense, almost larger than St. Régis, and there we have fifty rooms besides refectories and schoolrooms, you know."

"Here I have forty. So that many guests can come and enjoy the pleasures of country life, you see. It is well to be hospitable, is it not, my dear?"

They were at the great bronze front door.

A lackey in crimson waited upon them.

A maid in black and white also waited upon them, and took charge at once of Barbara and her boxes.

But it was Dreamland!

Fairyland!

Palaceland!

Barbara saw no one else then—nor for an hour, when she was summoned to go down to the drawing-room. Mrs. Barrows waited for her at the head of the staircase.

Presently, with other guests, they sat down to dinner.

Barbara, assisted by the silent and most efficient maid, had put on her new pale-green gown with the shell-and-pearl fringes. She had asked Mrs. Barrows when she should wear it; if she should reserve it for a greater occasion? Mrs. Barrows had said becomingly enough,

"What greater than Sunday, always a feast-day, and I wish you to make a good impression on my other guests."

So Barbara in the pale green with its pink fringes, Barbara with her wonderful hair braided and crossed and recrossed, its waves resting on her divine white forehead, was seated at dinner next to a very handsome and distinguished-looking man, whose name, by the bye, she did not hear.

It was certainly two o'clock Monday morning, maybe half-past, when Philip Gould's car dashed into the park of Cléo la Roze's château and spun up to the big bronze door.

The château was a blaze of light from top to bottom.

There was no one to see it save those who came near. The château stood in a grove of poplars and fir trees.

As a footman sprang to open the car door for him, he asked,

"Is Mr. Wayland here?"

"I do not know, sir."

"Probably not. If he were, you would have seen him?"

"Certainly, sir."

Gould was out of his car and on the broad stone veranda when his own man inquired: "*Monsieur* returns to Paris this evening? I will remain in readiness, or not, if *mon-sieur* pleases?"

"Well, remain in readiness," was the master's half-hesitant reply. Gould didn't stop to think why he gave this order; it was impulse.

There was laughter within, up in the drawing-room. There was music loud and accentuated from a couple of phonographs. There was dancing. There was wine. There were any number of other things.

Another footman awaited him in the grand hall.

"Would *monsieur* enter the drawing-room at once, or would he prefer to go upstairs and renovate his *toilette*?"

Monsieur would go up. There had been a little mishap on the drive, and he had helped at the tires; his hands were oily.

The music and the mirth and the rhythmic tread of the dancers' measure were all in his ears. As he ascended the marble staircase, he glanced down to see that minute corner of the drawing-room he had often seen before, visible from just this coign of vantage; he could barely discern the swirl of silks and satins and laces, the slippers of gold and silver cloth. Then the floor space cleared for a whole moment, as he watched, going slowly up, his hand upon the rail; then a glimpse of two tiny pink-satin shoes with paste buckles, a floating length of pale-green gauzy stuffs, a tassel made of shells and pearl fringe.

Where had he seen a frock of these colors before?

In a shop window he remembered; and he had gone in and bought it.

He was at the top of the staircase by then, and a deft valet was there to meet him as he went into one of the rooms. He sent the servant away.

The blaze of light from every bulb offended him; his eyes were blurred and unsteady from the tense spin down from Paris, sixty miles against the north wind.

He touched the button and was in darkness save for the soft effulgence from the tall electroliers that stood on the veranda below.

He had taken off his coat and waistcoat and was at the lavatory washing his hands, his fur coat and cap on the tree.

Gould, a bit absorbed in scrubbing the stains from his fingers, noted the perfume of the soap as being identical with the perfume of Madame la Roze's correspondence-sachet. He didn't think again of Barbara; indeed, the fleeting reminder the train of a frock had fetched him a few moments since was already completely effaced. He was in, and of, his habitual elements; and, as his daughter was neither habitual with him nor yet pertaining to his customary environments, he soon had slipped lengths away from any hint of her existence.

But he was presently quite alive to the screams of laughter sounding up to him from below, to the quicker and quicker tempo of the Lehar waltz that was being played, to the buzz and crank, too, of a car just pulling up at the portico.

Could it be Wayland arriving to-night, or rather this morning? He crossed to the window. The big car was now stationary; the chauffeur in his seat, his hand even upon the wheel, when, amid louder laughter, a man with a girl in his arms came dashing out of the house and down the long broad flight of stone steps.

The two were in shadow for the moment, the girl and the man; all that was distinctly visible was a long unbraided tress of golden hair hanging over a brocaded cloak of some rich fur; and, dragging on the steps, a fluff and frill of the pale-green frock, a half-yard of its shell-and-pearl fringe, broken and ragged, almost tripping up the man whose burden was its wearer.

Gould frankly, and as idly, wondered who they were—or rather who the man was; he shrugged his shoulders and was turning away, the towel in his hands, when, amid a gust of further merriment and a babel of voices, a lackey fetched from the house a glass of wine.

The man took it and violently urged it upon the girl, who at last drank it as it was held to her lips.

The servant caught the glass as it was tossed to him; the man's arm went around the girl; the girl turned her head; the full flare of the great electroliers was on her

face, her lovely piquant face with its splotches of burning scarlet in the round, fair cheeks, its shining starry eyes, its parted scarlet lips, its disheveled hair——

The face was Barbara's—his daughter's face.

Gould made one dash out the door, snatching his fur coat as he went, one plunge down the stairs, one plunge into the midst of the maddest revel, out on the veranda, while they stared and stared and were silent—for a few seconds only.

The car had gone with the man and girl in it; it was not even in sight by then; it was going at seventy miles an hour.

Gould asked, "Who went away?" He said it as coolly as he knew he must. He had been a gambler for years; even at this crisis he didn't lose his head.

Some one answered, "Hugh Wayland."

Gould jumped out where the cars were parked, and found his own.

"Which way was that car headed for?" he asked his man.

"For Paris, *monsieur*. I know for Paris, for the driver told me he was returning to-night."

"Start for Paris!" They started.

"Did you see the number?"

"No, *monsieur*. It was a public car."

"Who is the driver?"

"*Monsieur*, I do not know."

"Drive on; overtake the car and I'll give you fifty thousand francs—more, one hundred thousand francs—more yet, all I have in the world."

But Gould never overtook the public car.

III

HE never overtook, or caught up with, or glimpsed it—or the man or the girl who had gone away together in it to Paris.

He spent two years and a half in his fruitless, terrible quest. But he never got any answer.

Until, one sunny afternoon in Buenos Aires—yes, Gould traveled all over the whole world looking for Barbara—he suddenly came face to face with Hugh Wayland.

It was a nonchalant meeting—the more or less frequent encounters of men living by their wits are seldom punctuated by any degree of emotion or surprise. They chatted of the chances of their trade in South

America, of the climate, of a hundred other things.

Finally, Philip Gould said, in a careless way, with a careless laugh: "Apropos, what's become of that little girl you carried off that time from Cléo la Roze's? I've never seen you since."

"Little girl? Cléo's?" repeated the younger man, in a puzzled tone. "Oh," he smiled, "I remember! Why, I don't know!"

The other man's muscles were strained; his brain and heart were strained to the cracking-point. He would have liked to choke Wayland to death.

But—he knew his game and his world and its way, and he sat quite still, as Wayland, leaning a bit more confidentially toward him (they were on a bench in a public park) went on:

"You see, Phil, about then I got into a scrape over that poker layout I'd been running along on the quiet, and I had to quit or go under. So I quitted Paris and all it contained."

"I see," was the interpolation, as one seemed to be expected.

"I ran over to the States—home, you know. One of my sisters was getting married. Did the reform stunt, and then came down here. Via Panama, of course. Good sport, there, I tell you!"

"Is there, now?" Gould sat still.

He realized, too, for he was a more than clever man, that there was nothing for him to do but sit still, then and there, in connection with this man who sat beside him. This man, in effect, had done nothing that he, Gould, might not have done also—nothing. Not a jot of it was in the least unparliamentary in the realm in which these two had long since seen fit to cast their allegiance and their lives.

In Paris. Wayland had left her in Paris. A rainbow bubble on the seething, boiling cauldron of the Paris her father knew so well.

He must get back to Paris.

Cléo la Roze?

Ah, long since Gould had plumbed those depths, if indeed man breathed who could sound them!

"I do not know," was the answer he received, with a smile, of course.

Before this, if any one had asked such questions in his hearing, in such a case, he would have smiled, too—and passed on.



DRAWN BY WILL FOSTER

As we went down-stairs, we could see in the music-room a very interesting couple
chatting earnestly over the piano

(The Germ Letter)

The Germ Letter

Craig Kennedy and his "workshop of scientific crime" have rarely had a more baffling puzzle to solve than the extraordinary blackmailing attack made upon the wealthy Mrs. Blake, so cleverly managed that it seemed as though even the most astute scientist would be unable to penetrate the mystery. Have you ever heard of germ-free toxins? Well, here is a chance to add to your store of knowledge and keep up to date with all the latest wrinkles of the medical and chemical professions. There is a strange fascination in reflecting on the great possibilities for evil that have gone hand in hand with the great good that scientific investigators have accomplished for the human race.

By Arthur B. Reeve

Author of "The Dead-Line," "The Curio Shop," and other Craig Kennedy stories

Illustrated by Will Foster

"**R**EAD the letter, Professor Kennedy. Then I will tell you the sequel."

Mrs. Hunter Blake lay back in the cushions of her invalid-chair in the sun-parlor of the great Blake mansion on Riverside Drive, facing the Hudson with its continuous reel of maritime life framed against the green-hilled background of the Jersey shore.

Her nurse, Miss Dora Sears, gently smoothed out the pillows and adjusted them so that the invalid could more easily watch us. Mrs. Blake, wealthy, known as a philanthropist, was not an old woman but had been for years a great sufferer from rheumatism.

I watched Miss Sears eagerly. Full-bosomed, fine of face and figure, she was something more than a nurse; she was a companion. She had bright, sparkling black eyes and an expression about her well-cut mouth which made one want to laugh with her. It seemed to say that the world was a huge joke and that she invited you to enjoy the joke with her.

Kennedy took the letter which Miss Sears proffered him, and, as he did so, I could not help noticing her full, plump forearm, on which gleamed a handsome, plain-gold bracelet. He spread the letter out on a dainty wicker table in such a way that we both could see it.

We had been summoned over the telephone to the Blake mansion by Reginald Blake, Mrs. Blake's eldest son. Regi-

nald had been very reticent over the reason, but had seemed very anxious and insistent that Kennedy should come immediately.

Craig read quickly, and I followed him, fascinated by the letter.

"Dear Madam," it began. "Having received my diploma as doctor of medicine and bacteriology at Heidelberg, in 1909, I came to the United States to study a most serious disease which is prevalent in several of the Western mountain-states."

So far, I reflected, it looked like an ordinary appeal for aid. The next words, however, were queer: "I have four hundred persons of wealth on my list. Your name was——"

Kennedy turned the page. On the next leaf of the letter-sheet was pasted a strip of gelatin. The first page had adhered slightly to the gelatin.

"Chosen by fate," went on the sentence ominously.

"By opening this letter," I read, "you have liberated millions of the virulent bacteria of this disease. Without a doubt you are infected by this time, for no human body is impervious to them, and up to the present only one in one hundred has fully recovered after going through all its stages."

I gasped. The gelatin had evidently been arranged so that, when the two sheets were pulled apart, the germs would be thrown into the air about the person opening the letter. It was all very ingenious.

The letter continued: "I am happy to

say, however, that I have a prophylactic which will destroy any number of these germs if used up to the ninth day. It is necessary only that you should place five thousand dollars in an envelop and leave it for me to be called for at the desk of the Prince Henry Hotel. When the messenger delivers the money to me, the prophylactic will be sent immediately.

"First of all, take a match and burn this letter to avoid spreading the disease. Then change your clothes and burn the old ones. Enclosed you will find in a germ-proof envelop an exact copy of this letter. The room should then be thoroughly fumigated. Do not come into close contact with any one near and dear to you until you have used the prophylactic. Tell no one. In case you do, the prophylactic will not be sent under any circumstances. Very truly yours, Dr. Hans Hopf."

"Blackmail!" exclaimed Kennedy, looking intently again at the gelatin on the second page.

"Yes, I know," responded Mrs. Blake anxiously; "but is it true?"

There could be no doubt from the tone of her voice that she more than half believed that it was true.

"I cannot say—yet," replied Craig, still cautiously scanning the apparently innocent piece of gelatin on the original letter, which Mrs. Blake had not destroyed. "I shall have to keep it and examine it."

On the gelatin I could see a dark mass which evidently was supposed to contain the germs.

"I opened the letter here in this room," she went on. "At first, I thought nothing of it. But this morning, when Buster, my prize Pekingese, who had been with me, sitting on my lap at the time and closer to the letter even than I was—when Buster was taken suddenly ill, I—well, I began to worry."

She finished with a little nervous laugh, as people will, to hide their real feelings.

"I should like to see the dog," remarked Kennedy simply.

"Miss Sears," asked her mistress, "will you get Buster, please?"

The nurse left the room. No longer was there the laughing look on her face. This was serious business.

A few minutes later she reappeared carrying gingerly a small dog-basket. Mrs. Blake lifted the lid. Inside was a beautiful

little "Peke," and it was easy to see that Buster was indeed ill.

"Who is your doctor?" asked Craig, considering.

"Doctor Rae Wilson, a very well-known woman physician."

Kennedy nodded recognition of the name. "What does she say?" he asked, observing the dog narrowly.

"We haven't told any one, outside, of it yet," replied Mrs. Blake. "In fact, until Buster fell sick, I thought it was a hoax."

"You haven't told any one?"

"Only Reginald and my daughter Betty. Betty is frantic—not with fear for herself but with fear for me. No one can reassure her. In fact, it was as much for her sake as any one's that I sent for you. Reginald has tried to trace the thing down himself, but has not succeeded."

She paused. The door opened, and Reginald Blake entered. He was a young fellow, self-confident, and no doubt very efficient at the new dances, though scarcely fitted to rub elbows with a cold world which, outside of his own immediate circle, knew not the name of Blake. He stood for a moment regarding us through the smoke of his cigarette.

"Tell me just what you have done?" asked Kennedy of him, as his mother introduced him, although he had done the talking for her over the telephone.

"Done?" he drawled. "Why, as soon as mother told me of the letter, I left an envelop up at the Prince Henry, as it directed."

"With the money?" put in Craig quickly.

"Oh, no—just as a decoy."

"Yes. What happened?"

"Well, I waited around a long time. It was far along in the day when a woman appeared at the desk. I had instructed the clerk to be on the watch for any one who asked for mail addressed to a Doctor Hopf. The clerk slammed the register. That was the signal. I moved up closer."

"What did she look like?"

"I couldn't see her face. But she was beautifully dressed, with a long, light, flowing linen duster, a veil that hid her features, and on her hands and arms a long pair of doeskin motoring-gloves. By George, she was a winner—in general looks, though! Well, something about the clerk, I suppose, must have aroused her suspicions. For, a moment later, she was gone in the crowd.

But she did not leave by the front entrance, through which she had entered. I concluded that she must have left by one of the side-street carriage doors."

"And she got away?"

"Yes. I found that she asked one of the boys at the door to crank up a car standing at the curb. She slid into the seat and was off in a minute."

Kennedy said nothing. But I knew that he was making a mighty effort to restrain comment on the bungling amateur-detective work of the son of our client.

Reginald saw the look on his face. "Still," he hastened, "I got the number of the car. It was 200859, New York."

"You have looked it up?" queried Kennedy quickly.

"I didn't need to do it. A few minutes later, Doctor Rae Wilson herself came out—storming like mad. Her car had been stolen at the very door of the hotel by this woman, with the innocent aid of the hotel employees."

Kennedy was evidently keenly interested. The mention of the stolen car had apparently at once suggested an idea to him.

"Mrs. Blake," he said, as he rose to go, "I shall take this letter with me. Will you see that Buster is sent up to my laboratory immediately?"

She nodded. It was evident that Buster was a great pet with her, and that it was with difficulty she kept from smoothing his silky coat.

"You—you won't hurt Buster?" she pleaded.

"No. Trust me. More than that, if there is any possible way of untangling this mystery, I shall do it."

Mrs. Blake looked, rather than spoke, her thanks. As we went down-stairs, accompanied by Miss Sears, we could see in the music-room a very interesting couple chatting earnestly over the piano.

Betty Blake, a slip of a girl in her first season, was dividing her attention between her visitor and the door by which we were passing.

She rose as she heard us, leaving the young man standing alone at the piano. He was of an age perhaps a year or two older than Reginald Blake. It was evident that, whatever Miss Betty might think, he had eyes for no one else but the pretty debutante. He even seemed to be regarding Kennedy sullenly, as a possible rival.

"You—you don't think it is serious?" whispered Betty, in an undertone, scarcely waiting to be introduced. She had evidently known of our visit but had been unable to get away to be present up-stairs.

"Really, Miss Blake," reassured Kennedy, "I can't say. All I can do is to repeat what I have already said to your mother. Keep up a good heart and trust me to work it out."

"Thank you," she murmured, and then, impulsively extending her small hand to Craig, she added, "Mr. Kennedy, if there is anything I can do to help you, I beg that you will call on me."

"I shall not forget," he answered, relinquishing the hand reluctantly. Then, as she thanked him and turned again to her guest, he added, in a low tone, to me, "A remarkable girl, Walter—a girl that can be depended on."

We followed Miss Sears down the hall.

"Who was that young man in the music-room?" asked Kennedy, when we were out of ear-shot.

"Duncan Baldwin," she answered. "A friend and bosom companion of Reginald's."

"He seems to think more of Betty than of her brother," Craig remarked dryly.

Miss Sears smiled. "Sometimes, we think they are secretly engaged," she returned. We had almost reached the door. "By the way," she asked anxiously, "do you think there are any precautions that I should take for Mrs. Blake—and the rest?"

"Hardly," answered Kennedy, after a moment's consideration, "as long as you have taken none in particular already. Still, I suppose it will do no harm to be as antiseptic as possible."

"I shall try," she promised, her face showing that she considered the affair, now, in a much more serious light.

"And keep me informed of anything that turns up," added Kennedy, handing her a card with the telephone-number of the laboratory.

As we left the Blake mansion, Kennedy remarked, "We must trace that car somehow—at least we must get some one working on that."

Half an hour later we were in a towering office-building on Liberty Street, the home of various kinds of insurance. Kennedy stopped before a door which bore the name, "Douglas Garwood: Insurance Adjuster."

The Germ Letter

Briefly, Craig told the story of the stolen car, omitting the account of the dastardly method taken to blackmail Mrs. Blake. As he proceeded, a light seemed to break on the face of Garwood, a heavy-set man whose very gaze was inquisitorial.

"Yes; the theft has been reported to us already by Doctor Wilson herself," he interrupted. "The car was insured in a company I represent."

"I had hoped so," remarked Kennedy. "Do you know the woman?" he added, watching the insurance adjuster, who had been listening intently as he told about the fair motor-car thief.

"Know her?" repeated Garwood emphatically. "Why, man, we have been so close to that woman that I feel almost intimate with her. The descriptions are those of a lady, well dressed, and with a voice and manner that would carry her through any of the fashionable hotels, perhaps into society itself."

"One of a gang of blackmailers, then," I hazarded quickly.

Garwood shrugged his shoulders. "Perhaps," he acquiesced. "It is automobile thieving that interests me, though. Why," he went on, rising excitedly, "the gangs of these thieves are getting away with half a million dollars' worth of high-priced cars every year. The police seem to be powerless to stop it. We appeal to them, but with no result. So, now we have taken things into our own hands."

"What are you doing in this case?" asked Kennedy.

"What the insurance companies have to do to recover stolen automobiles," Garwood replied. "For, with all deference to your friend, Deputy O'Connor, it is the insurance companies, rather than the police, which get stolen cars back."

He had pulled out a postal card from a pigeonhole in his desk, selecting it from several apparently similar. We read:

\$250.00 REWARD

We will pay \$100.00 for car, \$150.00 additional for information which will convict the thief. When last seen, driven by a woman, name not known, who is described as dark-haired, well dressed, slight, apparently thirty years old. The car is a Dixon, 1912, seven-passenger, touring, No. 193,222, License No. 200859, New York; dark-red body, mohair top, brass lamps, has no wind-shield; rear-axle brake-band clevis has extra nut on turn-buckle, not painted. Car last seen near Prince Henry Hotel, New York City, Friday the 10th.

Communicate by telegraph or telephone, after notifying nearest Police Department, with Douglas Garwood, New York City.

"The secret of it is," explained Garwood, as we finished reading, "that there are innumerable people who keep their eyes open and like to earn money easily. Thus we have several hundreds of amateur and enthusiastic detectives watching all over the city and country for any car that looks suspicious."

Kennedy thanked him for his courtesy, and we rose to go. "I shall be glad to keep you informed of anything that turns up," he promised.

In the laboratory, Kennedy quietly set to work. He began by tearing from the germ letter the piece of gelatin and first examining it with a pocket-lens. Then, with a sterile platinum wire, he picked out several minute sections of the black spot on the gelatin and placed them in agar, blood-serum, and other media on which they would be likely to grow.

"I shall have to wait until to-morrow to examine them properly," he remarked. "There are colonies of something there, all right, but I must have them more fully developed."

A hurried telephone-call late in the day from Miss Sears told us that Mrs. Blake herself had begun to complain, and that Doctor Wilson had been summoned but had been unable to give an opinion on the nature of the malady. Kennedy quickly decided on making a visit to the doctor, who lived not far down-town from the laboratory.

Doctor Rae Wilson proved to be a nervous little woman, inclined, I felt, to be dictatorial. I thought that secretly she felt a little piqued at our having been taken into the Blakes' confidence before herself, and Kennedy made every effort to smooth that aspect over tactfully.

"Have you any idea what it can be?" he asked finally.

She shook her head non-committally. "I have taken blood-smears," she answered, "but so far haven't been able to discover anything. I shall have to have her under observation for a day or two before I can answer that. Still, as Mrs. Blake is so ill, I have ordered another trained nurse to relieve Miss Sears of the added work—a very efficient nurse, a Miss Rogers."

Kennedy had risen to go. "You have had no word about your car?" he asked casually.

"None yet. I'm not worrying. It was insured."

"Who is this arch-criminal, Doctor Hopf?" I mused, as we retraced our steps to the laboratory. "Is Mrs. Blake stricken, now, by the same trouble that seems to have affected Buster?"

"Only my examination will show," Craig said. "I shall let nothing interfere with that, now. It must be the starting-point for any work that I may do in the case."

We arrived at Kennedy's workshop of scientific crime, and he immediately plunged into work. Looking up, he caught sight of me standing helplessly idle.

"Walter," he remarked thoughtfully, adjusting a microscope, "suppose you run down and see Garwood. Perhaps he has something to report. And, by the way, while you are out, make inquiries about the Blakes, young Baldwin, Miss Sears, and this Doctor Wilson. I have heard of her before, at least by name. Perhaps you may find something interesting."

Glad to have a chance to seem to be doing something, whether it amounted to anything or not, I dropped in to see Garwood. So far he had nothing to report except the usual number of false alarms. From his office I went up to the *Star* where, fortunately, I found one of the reporters who wrote society notes.

The Blakes, I found, as we already knew, to be well known and moving in the highest social circles. As far as known, they had no particular enemies other than those common to all people of great wealth. Doctor Wilson had a large practise, built up in recent years, and was one of the best known society-physicians for women. Miss Sears was unknown, as far as I could determine. As for Duncan Baldwin, I found that he had become acquainted with Reginald Blake at college, that he came of no particular family, and seemed to have no great means, although he was very popular in the best circles. In fact, he had had, thanks to his friend, a rather meteoric rise in society, though it was reported that he was somewhat involved in debt as a result.

I returned to the laboratory to find that Craig had taken out of a cabinet a peculiar-looking arrangement. It consisted of thirty-two tubes, each about sixteen inches long, with S-turns, like a minute radiator. It was altogether not over a cubic foot in size, and enclosed in a glass cylinder. There

were in it, perhaps, fifty feet of tubes, a perfectly closed tubular system, which I noticed Kennedy was keeping perfectly sterile in a germicidal solution of some kind.

Inside the tubes and surrounding them was a saline solution which was kept at a uniform temperature by a special heating apparatus.

Kennedy had placed the apparatus on the laboratory table, and then gently took the little dog from his basket and laid him beside it. A few minutes later, the poor little suffering Buster was mercifully under the influence of an anesthetic.

Quickly Craig worked. First, he attached the end of one of the tubes by means of a little cannula to the carotid artery of the dog. Then the other was attached to the jugular vein.

As he released the clamp which held the artery, the little dog's feverishly beating heart spurted the arterial blood from the carotid into the tubes holding the normal salt solution, and that pressure, in turn, pumped the salt solution which filled the tubes into the jugular vein, thus replacing the arterial blood that had poured into the tubes from the other end and maintaining the normal hydrostatic conditions in the body circulation. The dog was being kept alive, although perhaps a third of his blood was out of his body.

"You see," he said, at length, after we had watched the process a few minutes, "what I have here is in reality an artificial kidney. It is a system that has been devised by several doctors at Johns Hopkins.

"If there is any toxin in the blood of this dog, the kidneys are naturally endeavoring to eliminate it. Perhaps it is being eliminated too slowly. In that case, this arrangement which I have here will aid them. We call it vividiffusion, and it depends for its action on the physical principle of osmosis, the passage of substances of a certain kind through a porous membrane, such as these tubes of celloidin.

"Thus, any substance, any poison that is dialyzable is diffused into the surrounding salt solution and the blood is passed back into the body with no air in it, no infection, and without alteration. Clotting is prevented by the injection of a harmless substance derived from leeches, known as hirudin. I prevent the loss of anything in the blood which I want retained by placing in the salt solution around the tubes an

amount of that substance equal to that held in solution by the blood. Of course that does not apply to the colloidal substances in the blood, which would not pass by osmosis under any circumstances. But by such adjustments I can remove and study any desired substance in the blood, provided it is capable of diffusion. In fact, this little apparatus has been found in practice to compare favorably with the kidneys themselves in removing even a lethal dose of poison."

I watched in amazement. He was actually cleansing the blood of the dog and putting it back again, purified, into the little body. Far from being cruel, as perhaps it might seem, it was in reality probably the only method by which the animal could be saved, and at the same time it was giving us a clue as to some elusive, subtle substance used in the case.

"Indeed," Kennedy went on reflectively, "this process can be kept up for several hours without injury to the dog, though I do not think that will be necessary to relieve the unwonted strain that has been put upon his natural organs. Finally, at the close of the operation, serious loss of blood is overcome by driving back the greater part of it into his body, closing up the artery and vein, and taking good care of the animal so that he will make a quick recovery."

For a long time I watched the fascinating process of seeing the life-blood coursing through the porous tubes in the salt solution, while Kennedy gave his undivided attention to the success of the delicate experiment. It was late when I left him, still at work over Buster, and went up to our apartment to turn in, convinced that nothing more would happen that night.

The next morning, with characteristic energy, Craig was at work early, examining the cultures he had made from the black spots on the gelatin.

By the look of perplexity on his face I knew that he had discovered something that further deepened the mystery.

"What do you find?" I asked anxiously.

"Walter," he exclaimed, "that stuff on the gelatin is entirely harmless. There was nothing in it except common mold."

For the moment I did not comprehend. "Mold?" I repeated.

"Yes," he replied, "just common, ordinary mold such as grows on the top of a jar of fruit or preserves exposed to the air."

I stifled an exclamation of incredulity. It seemed impossible that the deadly germ note should be harmless, in view of the events that had followed its receipt.

Just then the laboratory door was flung open and Reginald Blake, pale and excited, entered.

"What's the matter?" asked Craig.

"It's about my mother," he blurted out. "She seems to be getting worse all the time. Miss Sears is alarmed, and Betty is almost ill herself with worry. Doctor Wilson doesn't seem to know what it is that affects her. Can't you do something?"

There was a tone of appeal in his voice that was not like the self-sufficient Reginald of the day before.

"Does there seem to be any immediate danger?" asked Kennedy.

"Perhaps not—I can't say," he urged. "But she is gradually getting worse instead of better."

Kennedy thought a moment. "Has anything else happened?" he asked slowly.

"N-no. That's enough, isn't it?"

"Indeed it is," replied Craig, trying to be reassuring. Then, recollecting Betty, he added: "Reginald, go back and tell your sister for me that she must positively make the greatest effort of her life to control herself. Tell her that her mother needs her—needs her well and brave. I shall be up at the house immediately. Do the best you can. I depend on you."

Kennedy's words seemed to have a bracing effect on Reginald, and a few moments later he left, much calmer.

"I hope I have given him something to do which will keep him from musing things up again," remarked Kennedy.

Meanwhile Craig plunged furiously into his study of the substances he had isolated from the saline solution in which he had "washed" the blood of the little Pekingese.

"There's no use doing anything in the dark," he explained. "Until we know what it is we are fighting, we can't very well fight."

For the moment I was overwhelmed by the impending tragedy that seemed to be hanging over Mrs. Blake. The more I thought of it, the more inexplicable became the discovery of the mold.

"That is all very well about the mold on the gelatin strip in the letter," I insisted, at length. "But, Craig, there must be something wrong somewhere. Mere molds could



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ging of the bushy
tail seemed to bright-
en her up, at least for
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she had received a new impetus

not have made Buster so ill, and now the infection, or whatever it is, has spread to Mrs. Blake herself."

He looked up from his close scrutiny of the material in one of the test-tubes which contained something he had recovered from the saline solution.

I could read on his face that, whatever it was, it was serious. "What is it?" I repeated, almost breathlessly.

"I suppose I might coin a word to describe it," he answered slowly, measuring his phrases. "Perhaps it might be called hyperamino-acidemia."

I puckered my eyes at the mouth-filling term.

Kennedy smiled. "It would mean," he explained, "a great quantity of the amino-acids—non-coagulable, nitrogenous compounds in the blood. You know the

indols, the phenols, and the amins are produced both by putrefactive bacteria and by the process of metabolism, the burning-up of the tissues in the process of utilizing the energy that means life. But under normal circumstances, the amins are not present in the blood in any such quantities as I have discovered by this new method of diffusion."

He paused a moment, as if in deference to my inability to follow him on such an abstruse topic, then resumed: "As far as I am able to determine, this poison or toxin is an amin similar to that secreted by certain cephalopods found in the neighborhood of Naples. It is an aromatic amin. Smell it."

I bent over and inhaled the peculiar odor.

"Those creatures," he continued, "catch their prey by this highly active poison secreted by the so-called salivary glands. Even a little bit will kill a crab easily."

I was following him, now, with intense interest, thinking of the astuteness of a mind capable of thinking of such a poison.

"Indeed it is surprising," he resumed thoughtfully, "how many an innocent substance can be changed by bacteria into a virulent poison. In fact, our poisons and our drugs are in many instances the close relations of harmless compounds that represent the intermediate steps in the daily process of metabolism."

"Then," I put in, "the toxin was produced by germs, after all?"

"I did not say that," he corrected. "It might have been. But I find no germs in the blood of Buster. Nor did Doctor Wilson find any in the blood-smears which she took from Mrs. Blake.

"The writer of that letter," he went on, waving the piece of sterile platinum wire with which he had been transferring drops of liquid in his search for germs, "was a much more skilful bacteriologist than I thought, evidently. No; the trouble does not seem to be from germs breathed in, or from germs at all—it is from some kind of germ-free toxin that has been injected or otherwise introduced."

Vaguely, now, I began to appreciate the terrible significance of what he had discovered.

"But the letter?" I persisted mechanically.

"The writer of that was quite as shrewd a psychologist as a bacteriologist," pursued

Craig impressively. "He calculated the moral effect of the letter, then of Buster's illness, and finally of reaching Mrs. Blake herself."

"You think Doctor Rae Wilson knows nothing of it yet?" I queried.

Kennedy appeared to consider his answer carefully. Then he said slowly: "Almost any doctor with a microscope and the faintest trace of a scientific education could recognize disease-germs either naturally or feloniously implanted. But when it comes to the detection of concentrated, filtered, germ-free toxins, almost any scientist might be baffled. Walter," he concluded, "this is not mere blackmail, although perhaps the visit of that woman to the Prince Henry—a desperate thing in itself, although she did get away by her quick thinking—perhaps that shows that these people are ready to stop at nothing. No; it goes deeper than blackmail."

I stood aghast at the discovery of this new method of scientific murder. The astute criminal, whoever he might be, had planned to leave not even the slender clue that might be afforded by disease-germs. He was operating not with disease itself but with something showing the ultimate effects, perhaps, of disease, with none of the preliminary symptoms, baffling even to the best of physicians.

I scarcely knew what to say. Before I realized it, however, Craig was at last ready for the promised visit to Mrs. Blake. We went together, carrying Buster in his basket, not recovered, to be sure, but a very different little animal from the dying creature that had been sent to us at the laboratory.

We reached the Blake mansion and were promptly admitted. Miss Betty, bearing up bravely under Reginald's reassurances, greeted us before we were fairly inside the door, though she and her brother were not able to conceal the fact that their mother was no better. Miss Sears was out for an airing, and the new nurse, Miss Rogers, was in charge of the patient.

"How do you feel this morning?" inquired Kennedy, as we entered the sun-parlor where Mrs. Blake had first received us. A single glance was enough to satisfy me of the seriousness of her condition. She seemed to be in almost a stupor, from which she roused herself only with difficulty. It was as if some overpowering toxin were gradually undermining her already weak-

ened constitution. She nodded recognition, but nothing further.

Kennedy had set the dog-basket down near her wheel-chair, and she caught sight of it.

"Buster?" she murmured, raising her eyes. "Is—he—all right?"

For answer, Craig simply raised the lid of the basket. Buster already seemed to have recognized the voice of his mistress, and, with an almost human instinct, to realize that, though he himself was still weak and ill, she needed encouragement.

As Mrs. Blake stretched out her slender hand, drawn with pain, to his silky head, he gave a little yelp of delight, and his little red tongue eagerly caressed her hand.

It was as though the two understood each other. Although Mrs. Blake, as yet, had no idea of what had happened to her pet, she seemed to feel, by some subtle means of thought-transference, that the intelligent little animal was conveying to her a message of hope. The caress, the sharp, joyous yelp, and the happy wagging of the bushy tail seemed to brighten her up, at least for the moment, almost as if she had received a new impetus.

"Buster!" she exclaimed, overjoyed to get her pet back again in so much improved a condition.

"I wouldn't exert myself too much, Mrs. Blake," cautioned Kennedy.

"Were—were there any germs in the letter?" she asked.

"Yes, but about as harmless as those would be on a piece of cheese," Kennedy hastened.

"But I—I feel so weak, so played out—and my head—"

Her voice trailed off, a too evident reminder that her improvement had been only momentary and prompted by the excitement of our arrival.

Betty bent down solicitously and made her more comfortable, as only one woman can for another. Kennedy, meanwhile, had been talking to Miss Rogers, and I could see that he was secretly taking her measure.

"Has Doctor Wilson been here this morning?" I heard him ask.

"Not yet," she replied. "But we expect her soon."

"Professor Kennedy?" announced a servant.

"Yes?" answered Craig.

"There is some one on the telephone

who wants to speak to you. He said he had called the laboratory first and that they told him to call you here."

Kennedy hurried after the servant, while Betty and Reginald joined me, waiting, for we seemed to feel that something was about to happen.

"One of the unofficial detectives has unearthed a clue," Craig whispered to me, a few moments later, when he returned. "It was Garwood." Then, to the others, he added: "A car, repainted and with the number changed, but otherwise answering the description of Doctor Wilson's, has been traced to the West Side. It is somewhere in the neighborhood of a saloon and garage where drivers of taxi-cabs hang out. Reginald, I wish you would come along with us."

To Betty's unspoken question, Craig hastened to add: "I don't think there is any immediate danger. If there is any change—let me know. I shall call up soon. And meanwhile," he lowered his voice to impress the instruction on her, "don't leave your mother for a moment."

Reginald was ready, and together we three set off to meet Garwood at a subway station near the point where the car had been reported. We had scarcely closed the front door when we ran into Duncan Baldwin coming down the street, evidently bent on inquiring how Mrs. Blake and Betty were.

"Much better," reassured Kennedy. "Come on, Baldwin. We can't have too many on whom we can rely on an expedition like this."

"Like what?" he asked, evidently not comprehending.

"There's a clue, they think, to that car of Doctor Wilson's," hastily explained Reginald, linking his arm into that of his friend and falling in behind us.

It did not take long to reach the subway, and, as we waited for the train, Craig remarked: "This is a pretty good example of how the automobile is becoming one of the most dangerous of criminal weapons. All one has to do nowadays, apparently, after committing a crime, is to jump into a waiting car and breeze away, safe."

We met Garwood and, under his guidance, picked our way westward from the better known streets in the heart of the city to a section that was anything but prepossessing.

The place which Garwood sought was a typical Raines Law hotel on a corner, with a saloon on the first floor, and apparently

the requisite number of rooms above to give it a legal license.

We had separated a little, so that we would not attract undue attention. Kennedy and I entered the swinging doors boldly, while the others continued across to the other corner to wait with Garwood and take in the situation. It was a strange expedition, and Reginald was fidgeting, while Duncan seemed nervous.

Among the group of chauffeurs lounging at the bar and in the back room, any one who had ever had any dealings with the gangs of New York might have recognized the faces of men whose pictures were in the Rogues' Gallery and who were members of those various aristocratic organizations of the underworld.

Kennedy glanced about at the motley crowd. "This is a place where you need only to be introduced properly," he whispered to me, "to have any kind of crime committed for you."

As we stood there observing, without appearing to do so, through an open window on the side street I could tell from the sounds that there was a garage in the rear.

We were startled to hear a sudden uproar from the street.

Garwood, impatient at our delay, had walked down past the garage to reconnoiter. A car was being backed out hurriedly, and, as it turned and swung around the corner, his trained eye had recognized it.

Instantly he had reasoned that it was an attempt to make a getaway and had raised an alarm.

Those nearest the door piled out, keen for any excitement. We, too, dashed out on the street. There we saw passing an automobile, swaying and lurching at the terrific speed with which its driver urged it up the avenue. As he flashed by, he looked like an Italian to me, perhaps a gunman. Garwood had impressed a passing trolley-car into service and was pursuing the automobile in it, as it swayed on its tracks as crazily as the motor did on the roadway, running with all the power the motorman could apply.

A mounted policeman galloped past us, blazing away at the tires. The avenue was stirred, as seldom even in its strenuous life, with reports of shots, honking of horns, the clang of trolley-bells, and the shouts of men.

The pursuers were losing when there came a rattle and roar from the rear wheels which

told that the tires were punctured and the heavy car was riding on its rims. A huge brewery wagon crossing a side street paused to see the fun, effectually blocking the road.

The car jolted to a stop. The chauffeur leaped out and, a moment later, dived into a cellar. In that congested district, pursuit was useless.

"Only an accomplice," commented Kennedy. "Perhaps we can get him some other way if we can catch the man—or woman—higher up."

Down the street, now, we could see Garwood surrounded by a curious crowd but in possession of the car. I looked about for Duncan and Reginald. They had apparently been swallowed up in the crowds of idlers which seemed to be pouring out of nowhere.

As I ran my eye over them, I caught sight of Reginald, near the corner where we had left him, in an incipient fight with some one who had a fancied grievance. A moment later we had rescued him.

"Where's Duncan?" he panted. "Did anything happen to him? Garwood told us to stay here—but we got separated."

Policemen had appeared on the heels of the crowd, and now things seemed to be calming down.

The excitement over and the people thinning out, Kennedy still could not find any trace of Duncan. Finally, he glanced in again through the swinging doors. There was Duncan, evidently quite upset by what had occurred, fortifying himself at the bar.

Suddenly from above came a heavy thud, as if some one had fallen on the floor above us, followed by a suppressed shuffling of feet and a cry of help. Kennedy sprang toward a side door which led out into the hall to the hotel rooms above. It was locked. Before any of the others, he ran out on the street and into the hall that way, past a little cubby-hole of an "office," and down the upper hall to a door whence came the cry.

It was a peculiar room into which we burst, half bedroom, half workshop or rather laboratory, for, on a deal table by a window, stood a rack of test-tubes, several beakers, and other paraphernalia.

A chambermaid was shrieking over a woman who was lying lethargic on the floor. I looked more closely. It was Dora Sears!

For the moment I could not imagine what

had happened. Had the events of the past few days driven her into temporary insanity? Or had the blackmailing gang of automobile thieves, failing in extorting money by their original plan, seized her?

Kennedy bent over and tried to lift her up. As he did so, the gold bracelet, unclasped, clattered to the floor.

He picked it up and, for a moment, looked at it. It was hollow, but in that part of it where it unclasped could be seen a minute hypodermic needle.

"A poison bracelet," he muttered to himself, "one in which enough of a virulent poison could be hidden so that, in an emergency, death could cheat the law."

"But this Doctor Hopf," exclaimed Reginald, who stood behind us, looking from the insensible girl to the bracelet and slowly comprehending what it all meant; "she alone knows where and who he is!"

We looked at Kennedy. What was to be done? Was the criminal higher up to escape because one of his tools had been cornered and had taken the easiest way to get out? Kennedy had taken down the receiver of the wall telephone in the room. A moment later he was calling insistently for his laboratory. One of the students in another part of the building answered. Quickly he described the apparatus for vividiffusion and how to handle it.

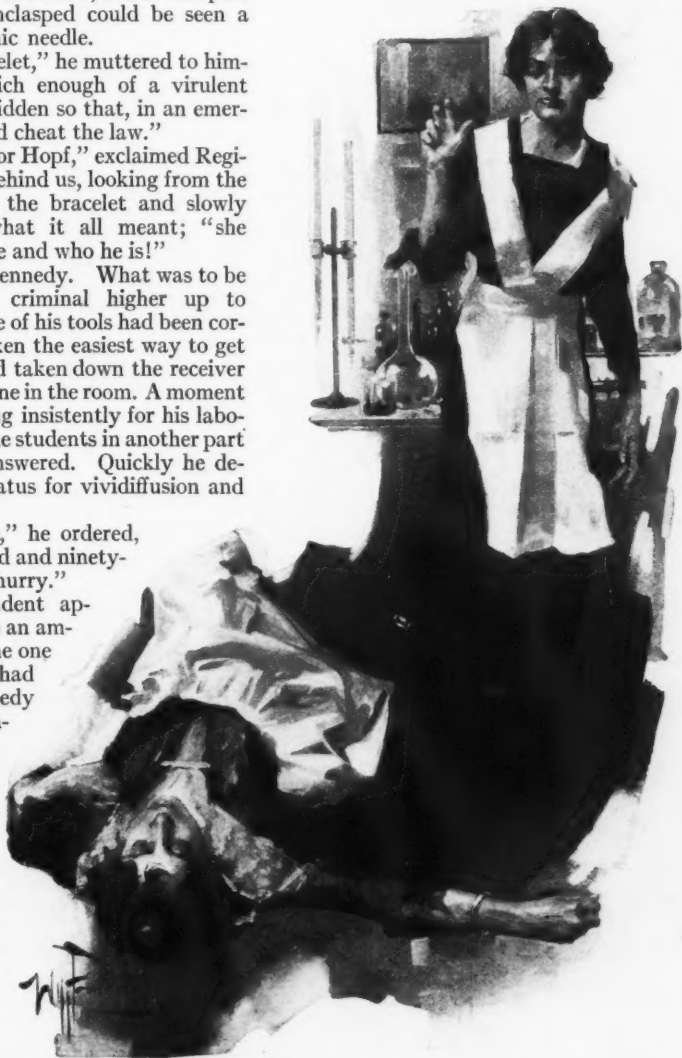
"The large one," he ordered, "with one hundred and ninety-two tubes. And hurry."

Before the student appeared there came an ambulance which some one in the excitement had summoned. Kennedy quickly commanded both the young doctor and what surgical material he had with him.

Briefly he explained what he proposed to do, and before the student arrived with the apparatus, they had placed the nurse in such a position that they were ready.

The next room, which was unoccupied, had been thrown open to us, and there I waited with Reginald and Duncan, endeavoring to explain to them the mysteries of the new process of washing the blood.

The minutes lengthened into hours as the blood of the poisoned girl coursed through its artificial channel, literally being washed of the toxin from the bracelet.



A chambermaid was shrieking over a woman who was lying lethargic on the floor. I looked more closely. It was Dora Sears!

Would it succeed? It had saved the life of Buster. But would it bring back the unfortunate before us, long enough, even, for her to yield her secret and enable us to catch the real criminal? What if she died?

As Kennedy worked, the young men with me became more and more fascinated watching him.

In the intervals when he left the apparatus in charge of the young ambulance surgeon, Kennedy was looking over the room. In a trunk, which was open, he found several bundles of papers. As he ran his eye over them quickly, he selected some and stuffed them into his pocket, then went back to watch the working of the apparatus.

Reginald, who had been growing more and more nervous, at last asked if he might call up Betty to find out how his mother was. He came back from the telephone, his face wrinkled.

"Poor mother," he remarked, anxiously, "do you think she will pull through, Professor?"

Kennedy thought for a moment. "Of course," he said, "your mother has had no such relative amount of the poison as Buster has had. I think that undoubtedly she will recover by purely natural means. I hope so. But if not, here is the apparatus," and he patted the vividiffusion tubes in their glass case, "that will save her."

As well as I could, I explained to Reginald the nature of the toxin that Kennedy had discovered. Duncan listened, putting in a question now and then. But it was evident that his thoughts were on something else, and, now and then, Reginald, breaking into his old humor, rallied him about thinking of Betty.

A low exclamation from both Kennedy and the surgeon attracted us.

Dora Sears had moved.

The operation of the apparatus was stopped; the artery and vein had been joined up, and she was slowly coming out from under the effects of the anesthetic.

As we gathered about her, we heard her cry in her delirium, "I—I—would have—done—anything for him."

We strained our ears. Was she talking of the blackmailer, Doctor Hopf?

"Who?" asked Craig, bending over.

"I—I would—have done anything," she repeated, as if some one had contradicted her. She went on, dreamily, ramblingly, "He—he—is—my brother. I—"

She stopped through weakness.

"Where is Doctor Hopf?" asked Kennedy, trying to recall her fleeting attention.

"Doctor Hopf? Doctor Hopf?" she repeated, then smiling to herself as people will when they are leaving the border-line of anesthesia, she repeated the name, "Hopf?"

"Yes," persisted Kennedy.

"There is no Doctor Hopf," she added. "Tell me—did—did they—"

"No Doctor Hopf?" Kennedy insisted.

She had lapsed again into half-insensibility. Craig rose and faced us, speaking rapidly:

"New York seems to have a mysterious and uncanny attraction for odds and ends of humanity, among them the great army of adventuresses. In fact, there often seems to be something decidedly adventurous about the nursing profession. This is a girl of unusual education in medicine. Evidently she has traveled—her letters show it. Many of them show that she has been in Italy. Perhaps it was there that she heard of the drug that has been used in this case. It was she who injected the germ-free toxin, first into the dog, then into Mrs. Blake, she who wrote the blackmail letter which was to have explained the death."

He paused. Evidently she had heard dimly, was straining every effort to hear. In her effort, she caught sight of our faces, and she raised herself with almost superhuman strength.

"Duncan!" she cried. "Duncan! Why—didn't you—get away—while there was time—after you warned me?"

Kennedy had wheeled about and was facing us. He was holding in his hand some of the letters he had taken from the trunk. Among others was a folded piece of parchment that looked like a diploma. He unfolded it, and we bent over to read.

It was a diploma from the Central Western College of Nursing. As I read the name written in, it was with a shock. It was not Dora Sears, but Dora Baldwin.

"A very clever plot," he ground out, taking a step nearer us. "With the aid of your sister and a disreputable gang you planned to hasten the death of Mrs. Blake, to hasten the inheritance of the Blake fortune by your future wife. I think your creditors will have less chance of collecting now than ever, Duncan Baldwin."



Miss Marlowe has always been able to make us realize the charm of unreality

mama" and "No, mama," but the pellucid, limpid quality of the unfledged maiden. Oddly enough, Miss Marlowe had wise advisers (they used to say that she was "coached" for years and years by a dramatic relative), and they saw to it that she did not attempt to impersonate the foolish



As Viola, in "Twelfth Night"

Julia and Juliet

By Alan Dale

NOT for the world would I tell you how long ago it was! But I can still recall a demure and unpretentious afternoon at the Bijou Theater when we were all bidden to see a young actress make her initial New York appearance in "Ingomar." And I was distinctly "among those present."

The young actress happened to be Julia Marlowe, and the one performance stamped her at once as an artist. I don't think there was a dissenting voice. The "reluctant" girlhood charm that has since made her so wonderful, was even then perceived and appreciated as something unusual.

I despise reminiscence—it is the refuge for the destitute—but this occasion was unique for me, because I have been able to follow Miss Marlowe in all the phases of her career, and that little afternoon could not efface itself from my memory. I like to remember it.

Girlhood was for a long time Julia Marlowe's specialty—not the simpering, white-muslin girlhood that says, "Yes,

Julia and Juliet



As
Katharine
the
shrew



In vaca-
tion-time

"girls" in modern plays. As soon as she had fledged herself as a star, she dipped into the rôles of Rosalind and Juliet. New York was at first cold, as New York Miss Marlowe flew to that solace politanly disappointed, known They say that "the road" is a ter, but I have never been able At any rate, "the road" was to divest Julia Marlowe of and she came back all the ence in the wilds. She was without a tendency to advisers gave her good to her high ideals, and soon within her reach. ager, in those days, level best to keep lowe alertly to her always had a good and fairly effective surroundings (though these were never emphasized), and gradually we began to accept her as she wanted to be accepted. Most people



Rosa-
lind was
one of Miss Marlowe's first
rôles as a star

have forgotten that delightful little play, "Bonnie Prince Charlie," that did so much for her. She was the hapless maiden in tatters, clinging to a very declamatory old grandfather, and lavishing her girlhood upon the cause of patriotism and also—far more entertainingly—upon Bonnie Prince Charlie. In this play, Julia Marlowe showed us how a girl is kissed for the first time. She gave us



We have all adored the ingenuous picture of Juliet offered us by Julia Marlowe

an inkling of the lovely and old-fashioned idea of love at first sight, and she did it exquisitely. It was this idea of pictorial girlhood that made her such an adorable Juliet. We really have very little sympathy with the ordinary Juliet, because she seems so utterly idealistic. But Julia Marlowe, when she first played Juliet, made a tremendous impression in that rôle. There was so much poetry in it. Miss Marlowe has always been able to make us realize the charm of unreality. She never bothered herself much about presenting types that really existed. There couldn't be a real Juliet, but we adored the ingenuous picture offered us by Julia Marlowe.

She is known rather for her Shakespearian impersonations than for any modern rôles. Yet you would be surprised if I recalled the non-Shakespearian rôles she has played. In addition to "Bonnie Prince Charlie," we had "Barbara Frietchie," "When Knighthood Was in Flower," "The Sunken Bell," "Countess Valeska," "Colinette," "The

Cavalier," "Joan of Arc," and "The Goddess of Reason"—all almost forgotten, while every Shakespearian rôle has lived. I may except Cleopatra. It did not surprise me at all to find this actress unable to suggest the wiles and cajoleries of Cleopatra, and the failure was one of prestige rather than of disaster.

Marlowe and Sothorn have given



Miss Marlowe as Ophelia and (right) Portia. It is she who has made Shakespeare possible for us to-day as steady diet

the lie to the assertion that Shakespeare spells failure. It has never done so in their case. In fact, I consider it is Julia Marlowe who has made Shakespeare possible to-day as steady diet.

The Smiles and Tears of Janie

"ACTORS and writers are awfully interesting—to each other and to the rest of the world—I suppose because they are both so much interested in life, don't you think?"

Her own eager, sensitive, dark-eyed beauty unconsciously emphasized the first part of the proposition as she spoke.

Yes, they are interesting—especially such vivid, life-loving actresses as Jane Grey. David Belasco found her so. Leo Ditrichstein instantly divined her delicately poised temperament, and drew it out with un-

erring artistic skill. George M. Cohan added a timely touch to its development. Then Charles Frohman tried Miss Grey in some important leads.

Latterly, Messrs. Klaw and Erlanger have given wider managerial exploitation to this intensely individual talent in the dramatization of George Randolph Chester's novel, "Cordelia Blossom."

It is not egotism but earnestness that animates the bewitching Betty of that healthy farce, "Nearly Married," as she greets the interviewer.

"I am a Vermont girl, born with the New England conscience you hear so much about. From the time I recited Bob Ingersoll's Memorial Day oration at primary-school exercises in my home town of Middlebury, it was all settled by destiny what my career should be. I am less than ten years on the regular stage, but in some ways that is a lifetime. Mine has been what you might call a long-distance training—first in a small stock company in New England, then in a large stock company in Los Angeles, California, and, at last, nearly starred on Broadway.

"Art dawned upon me only when I reached my grand goal of a Belasco engagement and played in try-outs with Leo Ditrichstein. According to my estimate, Dallas, in Concert," is the

Miss Grey is an eager, sensitive, dark-eyed beauty

Leo Ditrichstein. According to Mrs. The

best part I ever had. It is so subtle, so exquisitely balanced, that unless

(C) STRATHMORE

She is a Vermont girl, born with the New England conscience



played with a certain intuitive sympathy that no stage-manager—not even Mr. Belasco or Mr. Ditrichstein—can direct, it would throw the whole piece off key. You see, Mrs. Dallas is infatuated not with the musician as a man but with his musical genius in the abstract. That makes all the difference. And the distinction must be clearly impressed, the lady herself at the same time apparently unconscious of it, in order that she may retain the sympathy of the audience, and that her husband may freely pardon her escapade, as he does, without violating the logic of human nature or forfeiting honor and self-respect. For a long time they didn't dare tell me how well I was succeeding in this part, for fear I would become self-conscious and spoil it all. But I lasted three seasons—and I miss it yet.

Margaret Holt, in "The Conspiracy," gave Miss Grey a more

(C) STATHOS



She loves the stage, but retains her domestic tastes

sensational showing in the eyes of the Metropolitan public.

"For me," she declares, "art means only beauty—and a clean conscience. There is no such thing as light, frivolous acting. Foolish and flimsy plays, yes. But acting, like any other art, is always serious, and must have the true, hearty ring. Take 'Nearly Married,' for instance. At rehearsals, I couldn't make Betty plausible in the last act, or could Mr. Selwyn, the author, tell me how. George Cohan was called in, and

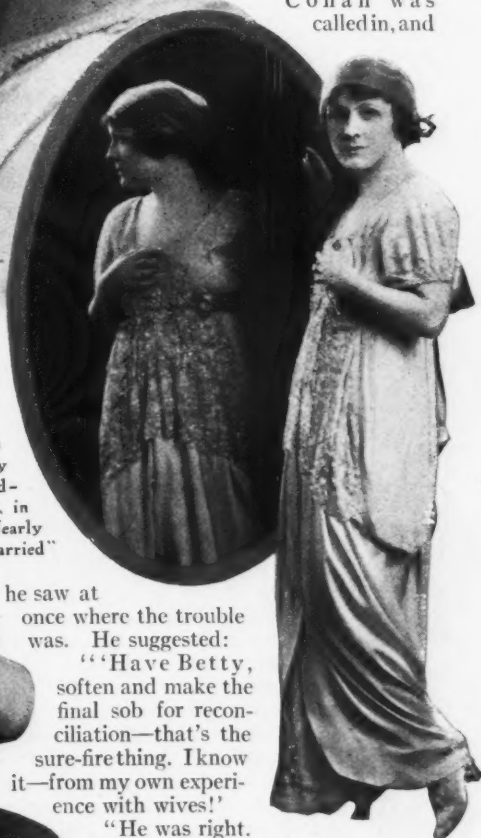
As
Betty
Lind-
sav, in
"Nearly
Married"

he saw at once where the trouble was. He suggested:

"Have Betty, soften and make the final sob for reconciliation—that's the sure-fire thing. I know it—from my own experience with wives!"

"He was right. And my personal sentiments are just on that order."

To her, art means only beauty—and a clean conscience



(C) MURPHY

A Model of the "Movies"

SHE may have been Cleopatra, magically released, after three thousand years of mummyhood, to the strenuous womanly life of to-day. At any rate, where she is, animation reigns, and dull monotony finds no excuse for further existence. Heiress to a fabulous fortune, shadowed by lovers, pursued by villains, held up in crippled motor-cars on the wild road to the aviation-meet, and booked for flight in a "fixed" aeroplane that turns turtle and falls from the sky a hideous wreck—these are mere every-day incidents in the fiction-career of the beauteous and popular Pathé heroine. Such is Pauline, of "The Perils."



PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMPBELL STUDIO

The popular heroine of "The Perils of Pauline"



PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMPBELL STUDIO

Where she is, animation reigns



Scene from "The Perils of Pauline," one of the most absorbing and exciting photo-plays that have yet been produced

Pearl White, the leading actress of the big photo-play studio on Jersey City Heights, is quite another person.

She was born in Missouri. She is not much past twenty years of age—yet enough to have "tried out" her temperament to various artistic vehicles. Her hair is red, with natural complexion to match. Eyes, extra large, green in sunlight and violet-dark in the gloaming. Pearl White is her real name—had she chosen a fictitious one, she says it wouldn't be so silly-sounding. Her parentage—Irish-American father and Italian mother. As for schooling—well, in addition to Chicago and New York bringing-up, she has played feminine leads with Nat Goodwin on the regular stage, and done two thousand feet of film a week for a year

PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMPBELL STUDIO

and a half at a stretch. A year with the circus, in her childhood, started her in the superb physical training which she keeps up to this day.

All these details, and many more, seem necessary, to account for Pauline in the "movies," and Pearl White in the pleasant, frank, and serious interview snatched from a film rehearsal.

"We are supposed to be in love with this sort of thing to the exclusion of the other kind of acting. But, knowing both, I must say that playing to the camera is largely a business of regrets, artistically at least. You

to harness and expressed in a purely mechanical way. It is a great and growing art, though.

"When fate picks out a girl for the photoplay career, it is liable to do all sorts of unexpected

PHOTOGRAPH
BY
CAMPBELL
STUDIO



An every-day incident in the fiction-career of Miss White as Pauline

PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMPBELL STUDIO
Pearl White has played feminine leads with Nat Goodwin

have only one chance at a characterization, and must stand or fall by what you make it the first time. Experience makes you camera-wise, but that technique is about all you learn. The rest is from past performances—a temperament broken

things with her life—exactly as the director does with her work. No one can guess the mummy's secret, or how the plot will finally unravel. Incidentally, though, it solves for her the problem of woman's economic independence, for she may earn as much as two hundred dollars a week, and for fifty-two weeks in the year.

"Besides, it is a grand excuse for moods, since it turns them all to account on the films, and so nothing is wasted."

Her hair is red, with natural complexion to match

The Hidden Children

THE STORY OF THE LIFE AND LOVE OF A NAMELESS WOMAN

By Robert W. Chambers

Author of "The Common Law," "The Streets of Ascalon," "The Business of Life," etc.

Illustrated by Howard Chandler Christy

SYNOPSIS—The narrator is Euan Loskiel, a young ensign serving under General James Clinton. He is the leader of a party of Indian scouts in the army with which General Sullivan is carrying out Washington's plan to destroy the hostile Iroquois Confederacy in central New York. The time is the summer of 1779. The chief guide of the party is Mayaro, a Siwanos sagamore, but Mohican by adoption, who was brought by Loskiel and Lieutenant Boyd from Westchester County for that purpose. Their mission in search of the sagamore was successful through the aid of a beautiful young woman, who was seeking to learn from Mayaro the way to Catharinestown, the Iroquois stronghold where the sorcerer Amochol and a band of Eries who serve him perform their sacrilegious rites. When the two soldiers return with the Indian to headquarters near Otsego Lake, the girl stealthily follows. She is known to them only as Lois. Euan's regard for her quickly ripens into love, and the girl, suspicious of his attentions at first, comes to have for him a feeling of comradeship which slowly changes into real love. She tells him that she wishes to go to Catharinestown because she believes her mother is there. Every year she receives a mysterious message to seek "her who bore you," in the vale Yndaia, near Catharinestown. Like Euan, who has been brought up by the wealthy tory, Guy Johnson, and knows nothing of his parentage, she was a foundling, but it would appear from the contents of a packet found on her that her father was the Vicomte Louis-Jean de Contrecoeur killed in the battle of Lake George, 1755, and her mother the daughter of a French adventurer, Joncaire. There is further evidence that Lois had, at some period of her life, been in Catharinestown, and had been saved from a sacrificial rite practised by the Seneca sorcerers.

Euan befriends the girl and provides her with a fine outfit, and she becomes popular in the little social circle at the regiment's quarters. He induces her to abandon her cherished project and promises to bring back what news he can of her mother, if not the mother herself. He leaves the girl in care of Mrs. Bleeker, whose husband's regiment remains behind to guard the valley, and who has also under her protection a coquettish young woman, Magdalene (Lana) Helmer, whom Euan has known since he was a boy.

Euan and his scouts set out to mark the path for Clinton's force which is to join Sullivan's army at Tioga Point. In the party is an Erie, disguised as a Wyandotte, who attempts to betray the little band into the hands of hostile Senecas, and, failing in this through the watchfulness of Euan and Mayaro, who has performed the rite of blood-brotherhood with the young soldier, finally slays one of the scouts and barely misses killing Euan with his rifle. The traitor escapes and gains a secure place on a near-by cliff, whence he hurls threats and defiance at his pursuers. He predicts death for the whole party at the coming Festival of Dreams at Catharinestown, as well as for Lois, wherever she may be. He then reveals the secret of Euan's and Lois' parentage. Both are "hidden children," a status due to a custom of the Iroquois and their adopted captives. A newborn boy and girl are given to foster-parents and brought up far away from the tribe. They are then considered unpolluted and are expected to marry and bring an uncontaminated strain into the tribe. Euan is astounded that the Erie should have this information, and Mayaro, who, it seems, has known the ensign since he was a child, confirms it. The secret out, he tells Euan that he is the son of a Scotch fur-trader, whose widow was the captive of a St. Regis chief who probably has killed her. The boy was brought up a "hidden child" by Guy Johnson. The sagamore tells further that Lois' mother, after the battle of Lake George, was taken by the Senecas to Catharinestown, and evidently it is she who is constantly sending the messages. But Mayaro knows that the girl will be sacrificed by Amochol if she goes there, and therefore has refused to tell her the way.

The scouts reach Tioga Point, and, in a few days, the advance of Clinton's army appears. With it are Lois, Lana, and some other women. Lois is in high spirits, but Lana is despondent. She has fallen in love with Boyd, but has found that he is unworthy of her. After a short visit, the women are sent to Easton for safety, and Boyd sets out with a detail, consisting of Euan, his Indians, and some riflemen, to attempt to reach Catharinestown before the time of the Festival of Dreams, and crush Amochol and his degraded followers. At the head of his little party, Boyd leaves the fort under the denunciations of Dolly Glenn, a girl from Otsego, who claims that he should marry her.

TOWARD sundown we hailed our bullock-guard below the ruins of old Chemung, and passed forward through the army to the throat of the pass, where the Rifles lay.

The artillery was already in a sorry mess, nine guns stalled, and an ammunition wagon overturned in the ford. And I heard the infantry cursing the drivers and saying that we had lost thousands of cartridges.

At the outlet to the pass, Major Parr met us, cautioning silence. No fires burned,

and the woods were very still, so that we could hear in front of us the distant movement of men, and supposed that the enemy had come down to Chemung in force. But Major Parr told us that our scouts could make nothing of these incessant noises, reporting only a boat-load of Sir John Johnson's green-coated soldiers on the river, and a few Indians in two canoes; and that he had no knowledge whether Sir John, the two Butlers, McDonald, and Brant lay truly in front of us or whether these people were only a mixed scalping party of blue-

eyed Indians, Senecas, and other ragamuffin marauders bent on a more distant foray, and now merely lingering along our front overnight, to spy out what we might be about.

Also, he informed us that a little way ahead, on the Great Warrior trail, lay an Indian town, which our scouts reported to be abandoned, and said that he had desired to post our pickets there, but that orders from General Hand had prevented that precaution until the general commanding arrived.

Some few minutes after our appearance in camp, and while we were eating supper, there came a ruddy glimmer of torches from behind us, lighting up the leaves overhead; and Generals Sullivan, Clinton, Hand, and Poor rode up and drew bridle beside Major Parr, listening intently to the ominous sounds in front of us.

And, "What the devil do you make of it, Major?" says Sullivan, in a low voice. "It sounds like a log-rolling in March."

"My scouts give me no explanation," says Parr grimly. "I think the rascals are terrified."

"Send Boyd and that young interpreter," said Sullivan curtly.

So, as nobody could understand exactly what these noises indicated, and as headquarters' scouts could obtain no information, Lieutenant Boyd and I, with my Indians, left our supper of fresh roast corn and beans and went forward at once. We moved out of the defile with every precaution, passing the throat of the rocky pass and wading the little trout-brook over which our trail led, the Chemung River now lying almost south of us. Low mountains rose to the north and west, very dark and clear against the stars, and directly ahead of us we saw the small Indian town surrounded by cornfields, and found it utterly deserted, save for bats and owls.

A little way beyond it we crossed another brook close to where it entered the river, opposite an island. Here the Chemung makes a great bend, flowing in more than half a circle, and there are little hills to the north, around which we crept, hearing always the stirring and movements of men ahead of us, and unable to comprehend what they were so busily about.

Just beyond the island another and larger creek enters the river, and here, no longer daring to follow the Seneca trail, we turned southwest, slinking across the river flats,

through the high Indian grass, until we came to a hardwood ridge, from whence some of these sounds proceeded.

We heard voices very plainly, the splintering of saplings, and a heavier, thumping sound, which the Mohican whispered to us was like hewn logs being dragged over the ground and then piled up. A few moments later, Tahootowhee, who had crept on ahead, glided up to us and whispered that there was a high breastwork of logs on the ridge, and that many men were cutting bushes, sharpening the stems, and planting them to screen this breastwork so that it could not be seen from the Seneca trail north of us, along which lay our army's line of march. A pretty ambushade, in truth! But Braddock's breed had passed.

Silently, stealthily, scarcely breathing, we got out of that dangerous place, recrossed the grassy flats, and took to the river willows the entire way back. At the mouth of the pass, where my battalion lay asleep, we found Major Parr anxiously awaiting us. He sent Captain Simpson back with the information.

Before I could unlace my shirt, drag my pack under my head, and compose myself for sleep, Boyd, who had stretched himself out beside me, touched my arm.

"Are you minded to sleep, Loskiel?"

"I own that I am somewhat inclined that way," said I.

"As you please."

"Why? Are you unwell?"

He lay silent for a few moments, then,

"What a mortifying business was that at the Tioga fort," he said, under his breath. "The entire garrison saw it, did they not, Loskiel? Colonel Shreve and all?"

"Yes, I fear so."

"It will be common gossip to-morrow," he said bitterly. "What a miserable affair to happen to an officer of Morgan's!"

"A sad affair," I said.

"It will come to *her* ears, no doubt. Shreve's batmen will carry it down the river."

I was silent.

"Rumor runs the woods like lightning," he said. "*She* will surely hear of this disgraceful scene. She will hear of it at Easton. Strange," he muttered, "strange how the old truths hold! Our sins shall find us out. I never before believed that, Loskiel—not in a wilderness, anyway. I had rather be here dead and scalped than have

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had that happen and know that she must hear of it, one day."

He lay motionless for a while, then turned heavily on his side, facing me across the heap of dead leaves.

"Somehow or other," he said, "she heard of that miserable business—heard of it even at Otsego. *That* is why she would not marry me, Loskiel. Did you ever hear the like? That a man must be so utterly and hopelessly damned for a moment's careless folly—lose everything in the world for a thoughtless moonlight frolic! Where lies the justice in such a judgment?"

"It is not the world that judges you severely. The world cares little what a man's way may be with a maid."

"But—Lana cares. It has ended everything for her."

I said in a low voice,

"You ended everything for Dolly Glenn."

"How was I to know she was no light o' love—this camp tailoress—this silly little wench who—but let it go! Had she but whimpered and seemed abashed and unfamiliar with a kiss— Well, let it go! But I could cut my tongue out that I ever spoke to her. God! How lightly steps a man into a trap of his own contriving! And here I lie to-night, caring not whether I live or die in to-morrow's battle, already dawning on the Chemung. And yonder, south of us, in the black starlight, drift the bateaux, dropping down to Easton under the very sky that shines above us here. If Lana be asleep at this moment, I do not know. She tells me I have broke her heart—but yet will have none of me. Tells me my duty lies elsewhere; that I shall make amends. How can a man make amends when his heart lies not in the deed? Am I, then, to be fettered to a passing whim for all eternity? Does an instant's idle folly entail endless responsibility? Do I merit punishment everlasting for a silly amourette that lasted no longer than the July moon? Tell me, Loskiel, you who are called among us blameless and unstained, is there no hope for a guilty man to shrive himself and walk henceforward upright?"

"I cannot answer you," I said dully. "Nor do I know how, of such a business, a man may be shriven, or what should be his amends. It all seems pitiful and sad to me—a matter perplexing, unhappy, and far beyond my solving. I know it is the fashion of the times to regard such affairs lightly,

making of them nothing. Much I have heard, little learned, save that the old lessons seem to be the truest—the old laws the best. And that our cynical and modern disregard of them makes one's salvation none the surer, one's happiness none the safer."

I heard Boyd sigh heavily, where he lay; but he said nothing more that I heard, for I slept soon afterward, and was awakened only at dawn.

Everywhere in the rocky pass the yawning riflemen were falling in and calling off—a detail of surly Jersey men, carrying ropes, passed us, cursing the artillery, which, it appeared, was in a sorry plight again, the nine guns all stalled behind us, and an entire New Jersey brigade detailed to pull them out o' the mud and over the rocks.

Boyd shared my breakfast, seeming to have recovered something of his old-time spirits. And if the camp that night had gossiped concerning what took place at Tioga fort, it seemed to make no difference to his friends, who, one and all, greeted him with the same fellowship and affection that he had ever inspired among fighting men. No man, I think, was more beloved and admired in this Western army, by officers and men alike; for in him were naturally combined all those brilliant qualities of daring, fearlessness, and gaiety in the face of peril, which endear, and which men strive to emulate. In no enterprise had he ever failed to perform the part allotted him; never had he faltered in the hundred battles fought by Morgan's veteran corps; never had he seemed dismayed. And if sometimes he did a little more than he was asked to do, his superior officers forgave this handsome, impetuous young man—the more readily, perhaps, because, so far, no disaster had befallen when he exceeded the orders given him.

My Indians had eaten, and were touching up their paint when Major Parr came up, wearing a magnificent new suit of fringed buckskins, and ordered us to guide the rifle battalion. A moment later, our conch horn boomed out its thrilling and melodious warning. Far in the rear I heard the drums and bugle-horns of the light infantry sounding the "general."

As we went forward in the early daylight, the nature of the ambushade prepared for us became very plain to me; and I pointed out to Major Parr where the unseen enemy rested, his right flank protected by the

river, his left extending north along the hog-back, so that his lines enveloped the trail on which we marched, threatening our entire army in a most cunning and evil manner.

Toward eight o'clock, the conch horn blew; our riflemen halted and deployed in perfect silence, facing the unseen works on the wooded ridge ahead. Another division of troops swung to the left, continuing the movement to the river in splendid order, where they also halted and formed a line of battle, facing north. And still the unseen enemy gave no sign.

From where we lay we could see our artillery horses straining, plunging, stumbling up a high knoll in the center of our line, while Maxwell's division halted and extended behind our riflemen to support the artillery, and Clinton's four splendid New York regiments hurried forward on a double, regiment after regiment dropping their packs behind our lines and running north through the open woods, their officers all finely mounted and cantering ahead, swords drawn.

A few moments later, General Sullivan passed along our front on horseback, and drew bridle for a moment, where Boyd and I were standing at salute.

"Now is your opportunity, young gentlemen," he said, in a low voice. "If you would gain Catharinestown and destroy Amochol before we drive this motley tory army headlong through it, you should start immediately. And have a care—Butler's entire army and Brant's Mohawks are now entrenched in front of us; and it is a pitched battle we're facing—God be thanked!"

He spurred forward with a friendly gesture toward us as we saluted; and his staff-officers followed him at a canter, while our riflemen turned their heads curiously to watch the brilliant cavalcade.

"Where the devil are their log works?" demanded Major Parr, using his field-glasses. "I can see naught but green on that ridge ahead."

Boyd pointed at the crest; but our major could see nothing, and I called to Timothy Murphy and Dave Elerson to climb trees and spy out if the works were still occupied.

Murphy came down presently from the dizzy top of a huge black-walnut tree, reporting that he had been able to see into the river-angle of their works, had for a while

distinguished nothing, but presently discovered Indians, crouched motionless, the brilliancy of their paint betraying them when they moved.

"Now, God be praised!" said Major Parr grimly. "For we shall this day furnish these western gatekeepers with material for a condolence feast such as no Seneca ever dreamed of. And if you gentlemen can surprise and destroy Amochol, it will be a most blessed day for our unhappy country."

General Hand, in his patched and faded uniform of blue and buff, drew his long, heavy sword and walked his horse over to Major Parr.

"Well, sir," he said, "we must amuse them, I suppose, until the New Yorkers gain their left. Push your men forward and draw their fire, Major."

There came a low order; the soft shuffle of many moccasined feet; silence. Presently, ahead of us, a single rifle-shot shattered the stillness.

Instantly a mighty roar of tory musketry filled the forest, and their Indians, realizing that the ambushade had been discovered, came leaping down the wooded ridge, yelling and firing all along our front; and our rifles began to speak quicker and quicker from every rock and tuft and fallen log.

"Are we to miss this?" said Boyd restlessly. "Listen to that firing! The devil take this fellow Amochol and his Eries! I wish we were yonder with our own people. I wish, at least, that I could see what our New Yorkers are about."

Behind us, Boyd's twenty riflemen stood craning their sunburnt necks; and my Indians, terribly excited, fairly quivered where they crouched beside us. But all we could see was the rifle-smoke sifting through the trees, and the early sunshine slanting on the misty river.

The fierce yelling of the unseen Mohawks and Senecas on the wooded ridge above us had become one continuous and hideous scream, shrill and piercing, above the racket of musketry and rifle-fire; sometimes the dreadful volume of sound surged nearer as though they were charging, or showing themselves in order to draw us into a frontal attack on their pits and log breastworks; but always, after a little while, the yelping tumult receded, and our rifle-fire slackened while the musketry from the breastworks grew more furious, crashing out volley on volley, until the entire ridge



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

As we skirted the high knoll where our artillery was planted, the first



howitzer-shot shook the forest, and my Indians cringed as they ran beside me

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steamed like a volcano in action. Further to the north, we heard more musketry break out, as our New York regiments passed rapidly toward Butler's left flank. And, by the running fire, we could follow their hurried progress.

"Come on, Loskiel," said Boyd, furiously, flinging his rifle to his shoulder, "or we'll miss this accursed Amochol, also." And he gave the signal to march.

As we skirted the high knoll where our artillery was planted, the first howitzer-shot shook the forest, and my Indians cringed as they ran beside me. High-towering rose the shell, screaming like a living thing, and plunged with a shriek into the woods on the ridge, exploding there with a most infernal bang. Up through the trees gushed a very fountain of smoke, through which we could dimly see dark objects falling, but whether these were the limbs of trees or of men, we could not tell.

It was hard for us all, I think, to turn our backs on the first real battle we had seen in months—hard for Boyd, for me, and for our twenty riflemen; harder, perhaps, for our Indians, who could hear the yells of their most deadly enemies, and who knew that they were within striking-distance at last.

As we marched in single file, I leading with my Indians, I said aloud, in the Iroquois tongue:

"If, in this battle of the Chemung, the Mountain Snake be left writhing, yet, unless we crush his head at Catharinestown, the serpent will live to strike again. For though a hundred arrows stick in the Western Serpent's body, his poison lies in his fangs, his fangs are rooted in his head, and the head still hisses at God and man from the shaggy depths of Catharinestown. It is for us of the elect to slay him there—for us few and chosen ones, honored by this mandate from our commander. Why, then, should the thunder of Proctor's guns arouse in us envy for those who join in battle? Let the iron guns do their part; let the men of New York, of Jersey, of Virginia, of New Hampshire, of Pennsylvania do the great part allotted them. Let us in our hearts pray God to speed them. For if we do our part as worthily, only then shall their labor be not in vain. Their true title to glory is in our keeping, locked inevitably with our own. If we fail, they have failed. Judge, therefore, O Sagamore,

judge you, Yellow Moth, and you, Oneidas—Gray Feather, with your war-chief's feather and your sachem's ensign, Tahoon-towhee, chieftain to be—judge all of you, where the real glory lies—whether behind us in the rifle-smoke or before us in the red glare of Amochol's accursed altar!"

They had been listening to every word as I walked beside them. The Mohican made answer first:

"It was hard for us to leave the Chemung, O Loskiel, my brother—with the dog-yelps of the Sinako and Mowawaks insulting our ears. But it was wiser. I, a sagamore, say it!"

"It is God's will," said the Yellow Moth. But his eyes were still red with his fierce excitement; and the distant cannonade steadily continued as we marched.

"I am Roya-neh!" said the Gray Feather. "What wisdom counsels I understand. He who would wear the scaly girdle must first know where the fangs lie buried. But to hear the Antouhonoran scalp-yelp and to turn one's back, is very hard, O my friend Loskiel!"

The Night Hawk controlled his youthful features, forcing a merry smile as my eye fell on him.

"Koué!" he exclaimed softly. "I have made a promise to my thirsty hatchet, O Loskiel! Else it might have leaped from its sheath and bitten some one."

"A good hatchet and a good dog bite only under orders," I said. "My younger brother's hatchet has acquired glory—now it is acquiring wisdom."

Far below us in the river valley sounded the uproar of the battle—a dull, confused, and distant thunder—for now we could no longer hear the musketry and rifle-fire, only the boom-booming of the guns and the endless roar of echoes.

Here, on a high hill's spur, with a brisk wind blowing in our faces, the heavy rumble of forest warfare became deadened; and we looked out over the naked ridge of rock, across the forest of this broken country, into a sea of green which stretched from horizon to horizon, accented only by the silver glimmer of lakes and the low mountain-peaks east, west, and south of us.

Below us lay a creek, its glittering thread visible here and there. The Great Warrior trail crossed it somewhere in that ravine.

I drew the Mohican aside.

"Sagamore," said I, "now is your time

come. Now we depend on you. If it lay with us, not one white man here, not one Indian, could take us straight to Catharinetown; for the Great Warrior trail runs not thither. Are you, then, confident that you know the way?"

"I know the way, Loskiel."

"Is there, then, a trail that leads from the Great Warrior trail below?"

"There are many."

"And you know the right one?"

"I have spoken, brother."

"I am satisfied. But we must clearly mark the trail for our surveyors and for the army."

"We will make it," he said meaningly, "so that no Seneca dog can ever mistake which way we passed."

I did not exactly understand him, but I nodded to Boyd and he gave the signal, and we began the descent through the warm twilight of an open forest that sloped to the creek, a thousand feet below us.

Down and down we went, partly sliding, and plowing up the moss and leaves knee-deep, careless how we left our trail, as there was none to follow, save the *débris* of a flying army or the flanking scouts of a victorious one. Below us, the foaming riffles of the creek showed white in the woodland gloom, and presently we heard its windy voice amid rocks and fallen trees, souging all alone through leafy solitudes, and its cool, damp breath mounted to us as we descended.

The Indians dropped prone to slake their thirst; the riflemen squatted and used their cups of bark or leather, pouring the sweet, icy water over their cropped heads and wrists.

"Off packs!" said Boyd quietly, and drew a bit of bread and meat from his beaded wallet. And so the Mohican and I left them all eating by the stream, and crossed to the western bank. Here the sagamore pointed to the opposite slope; I gave a low whistle, and Boyd looked across the water at me.

Then I drew my hatchet and notched a tree so that he saw what I did; he nodded comprehension; we went on, notching trees at intervals, and so ascended the slope ahead until we arrived at the top.

Here the forest lay flat beyond, and the Great Warrior trail ran through it—a narrow path fifteen inches wide, perhaps, and worn nearly a foot deep, and patted as hard as rock by the light feet of generations

—men and wild beasts—which had traversed it for centuries.

North and south, the deeply graven war-trail ran straight through the wilderness. The Mohican bent low above it, scrutinizing it in the subdued light, then stepped lightly into it, and I behind him.

For a little way we followed it, seeing other and narrower trails branching from it right and left, running I knew not whither—the narrow, delicate lanes made by game—deer and bear, fox and hare—all spreading out into the dusk of the unknown forest.

Presently we came to a trail which seemed wet, as though swampy land were not far away, and into this the Mohican turned, slashing a great scar on the nearest tree.

There was a mossy stream ahead, and the banks of it were dark and soft. Here we rested, high and dry, on the huge roots of an oak, and ate our midday meal.

In a little while the remainder of our party came gliding through the trees, Boyd ahead.

"Is this the Catharinetown trail?" he asked. "By God, they'll never get their artillery through here! Mark it, all the same," he added indifferently, and seated himself beside me, dropping his rifle across his knees with a gesture of weariness.

"Are you tired?" I asked.

He looked up at me with a wan smile.

"Weary of myself, Loskiel, and of a life lived too lightly and now nigh ended."

"Nigh ended!" I repeated.

"I go not back again," he said somberly.

I glanced sharply at him, where he sat brooding over his rifle, and there was in his face an expression such as I had never before seen there—something unnatural that altered him altogether, as death alters the features, leaving them strangely unfamiliar. And even as I looked, the expression passed. He lifted his eyes to mine, and even smiled.

"There is," he said, "a viewless form which companions even the swiftest on the last long trail, a phantom pilot which leads only toward that shadowed valley of endless rest. In my ears all day—close, close to my ear, I have heard the whisper of this unseen ghost—everywhere I have heard it, amid the din of the artillery, on windy hilltops, in the long silence of the forest, through the noise of torrents in lost ravines, by flowing rivers sparkling in the sun—everywhere my pilot whispers to me. I cannot escape,

Loskiel; whatever trail I take, *that* is the trail; whichever way I turn, *that* is the way. And ever my phantom pilots me—forward or back, aside or around—it is all one to him and to me; for at the end of every trail I take, nearer and nearer draw I to mine end."

I had heard of premonitions before a battle, had known officers and soldiers to utter them—brave men, too, yet obsessed by the conviction of their approaching death. Sometimes they die, sometimes escape, and the premonition ends forever. But, until the moment of peril is passed or they fall as they had foretold, no argument will move them, no assurance cheer them. But our corps had been in many battles during the last three years, and I had never before seen Boyd this way.

He said, brooding on his rifle:

"The one true passion of my life has been Lana Helmer. It began ignobly; it continues through all this pain and bewilderment, a pure, clean current running to the deep, still sea of dreams. There it is lost; I follow it no further. And were I here to-day as upright and as stainless as are you, Loskiel, still I could follow it no further than that sea of dreams. Nor would my viewless pilot lead me elsewhere than to the destiny of silence that awaits me, and none the less would I hear his whisper in my ears. My race is run."

I said, "Is it vain to appeal to your reason when your heart is heavy?"

"Had I another chance," he said, "I would lighten the load of sin I bear—the heavy load I bear into the unknown."

"God gives us all our chance."

"He gave me my last chance at Tioga fort. And I cursed it in my heart and put it aside."

"One day, you will return."

"Never again, Loskiel. I am no coward. I dare face the wrath to come. It is not that, but—I am sorry I did not spare when I might have been more generous. The little thing was ignorant. Doves mate like that. And somewhere—somehow—I shall be required to answer for it all—shall be condemned to make amends. I wonder how the dead make their amends. For me to burn in hell, avails her nothing. If she thought it, she would weep, un comforted. No; there is a justice. But how it operates I shall never understand until it summons me to hear my sentence."

"You will return and do what a contrite heart bids you do," I said.

"If that might be," he said gently, "that would I do—for the child's sake and for hers."

"Good God!" I said, under my breath.

"Did you not surmise it?"

"No."

"Well, then, now you know how deeply I am damned. God gave me a last chance. There was a chaplain at the fort."

"Kirkland?"

"Yes. Gano went forward. But—God's grace was not within me. And to see her angered me—that and the blinding hurt I had when Lana left—heart-broken, wretched, still loving me, but consigning me to my duty. So I denied her at the bridge. And from that moment has my unseen pilot walked beside me, and I know he leads me swiftly to my end."

I raised my troubled eyes and glanced toward my Indians. They had stripped great squares of bark from half a dozen trees, and were busily painting upon them, in red and blue, insulting signs and symbols—a dead tree-cat scalped and full of arrows, a snake severed into sections, a Seneca tied to a post, and a broken wampum belt at his feet. And on every tree they had also painted the symbol of their own clans and nation—pointed stones and the stars of the Pleiades, a witch-wolf and an enchanted bear, a yellow moth alighted on a white cross, a night hawk, perfectly recognizable, soaring high above a sun, setting, bisecting the line of the horizon.

Every scalp taken was duly enumerated and painted there, together with every captured weapon. Such a gallery of art in the wilderness, I had never before beheld.

Boyd's riflemen sat around, cross-legged, on the moss, watching the Indians at their labor—all except Murphy and Elerson, who, true to their habits, had each selected a tree to decorate, and were hard at work with their hunting-knives on the bark.

On Murphy's tree I read, "To hell with Walter Butler!"

Elerson, who, no doubt, had scraped the outlines of this legend with his knife-point before Murphy carved it, had produced another message on his own tree, not a whit more complimentary: "Dam Butler, Brant, Hiakotoo, and McDonald for bloody rogues and murderin' rascals all!"

They were ever like this, these two great

overgrown boys, already celebrated so terribly in song and legend. And the rank and file of Morgan's resembled them—brave to a fault, innately lawless, of scant education, save what the forest had taught them, headstrong, quick to anger, quick to forgive, violent in every emotion through the entire gamut from love to hatred.

Boyd rose, glanced quietly at me, then made his signal. And in a few moments the riflemen were on the trail again, spotting it wherever a new path led away, trotting steadily forward in single file, my Indians ranging wide on either flank.

Late in the afternoon we came to the height of land where the little watercourses all ran north; and here we halted, dropped packs, and the men sat down while the sagamore and I once more went forward to the headwaters of a stream, beside which the narrow and swampy trail ran due north. And here the nature of the country changed entirely, for, beyond, it was all one vast swamp, as still and dark as death.

A little way along this blackish stream, Mayaro halted, and for a while stood motionless, his powerful arms folded, gazing straight in front of him with the half-closed eyes of a dreaming wolf.

Never had I looked upon so sinister a country or a swamp so vast and desolate. It seemed more black than dusky, and the gloom lay not in the obscure light of thick-set spruce, pine, and hemlock, but in the shaggy, monstrous, and forbidding growth which appeared to be soiled with some common dye, water, earth, tree-trunks, foliage—all wore the same inky livery, and seemed wrought of rusty iron, so still the huge trees stood with every melancholy branch adroop.

The Mohican's voice came to me, low in the silence.

"This is the land of Amochol," he said. "Here, through these viewless shades, his sway begins, as this stream begins, whose source is darkness and whose current moves slowly like thick blood. Here is the haunt of witch and sorcerer—of the hag Catharine, of the Wyoming Fiend, of Amochol—of Amochol! Here run the andastes, hunting through the dusk like wolves and foxes—running, smelling, listening, ever hunting. Here slink the Cat people under a moon which is hidden forever by this matted forest-roof. *This is the Dark Empire, O Loskiel! Behold!*"

A slight shudder chilled me, but I said, calmly enough,

"Where lies Catharinestown, O Sagamore?"

"This dark stream runs through it."

"Through Catharinestown?"

"Aye."

"And then?"

"Along the vast chain of inland seas—first into the lake of the Senecas, then to that of the Cayugas, fed by Owasco, by Onondaga, by Oneida, until it is called Oswego, and flows north by the great fort into the sea Ontario."

"And where lies Catharinestown?"

"Nine miles beyond us, northward."

"And the trail?"

"None, Loskiel, save for the maze of game-trails where long leaps are made from tussock to swale, from root to rotting log, across black pools of mud and quivering quicksands."

"But—those who come after us, Mayaro, the army—the wagons, horses, artillery, cattle—nay, the men themselves—how are they to pass?"

He pointed east, then west. "For six miles, flanking this swamp, run ridges of high hills northward. By these must the army march to Catharinestown, the pioneers opening a road for the artillery. This you shall make plain to Boyd presently, for he must march that way, marking plain the trail north on the eastern ridge of hills, then west. Thus shall Boyd move to cut off Amochol from the lake, while you and I and the Oneidas and the Yellow Moth must thread this swamp and comb it clean to head him from the rivers south of us."

"Is there a path along the ridge?"

"No path, Loskiel. So Boyd shall march by compass, slowly, seeking ever the level way and open woods, with the artillery and wagons ever in his thoughts. Six miles due north shall he march; then, where the hills end a swamp begins—thick, miry, set with maple, brier, and tamarack. But through this he must blaze his trail, and the pioneers who are to follow shall lay their wagon path across felled trees, northward still, across the forests that border the flats of Catharinestown; and then, still northward for a mile, and so swing west, severing the lake trail. Thus we shall trap Amochol between us."

Slowly we walked back together to the height of land, where our little party lay

looking down at the dark country below. I sat down beside Boyd, cleared from the soil the leaves for a little space, drew my knife, and with its point traced out the map.

"To-day is Sunday," I said. "By this hour, Butler's people should be in headlong flight. Our army will not follow them at once, because it will take all day to-morrow for our men to destroy the corn along the Chemung. But on Tuesday our army will surely march, laying waste the Indian towns and fields. Therefore, giving them ample time for this, they should arrive at this spot on Wednesday."

"I have so calculated," said Boyd listlessly.

"But Wednesday is the first day of September; and if we are to strike Amochol at all, it must be done during the Onon-houraria. And that ends on Tuesday. Therefore, must you move within the hour. And by to-morrow evening you shall have blazed your hill trail and shall be lying with your men beside the stream and across the lake trail, north of Catharinstown."

He nodded.

"To-night," said I, "I and my Indians lie here on this height of land, watching the swamp below that nothing creep out of it. On Monday morning we move through it, straight northward, following the stream, and by Monday night we scout to Catharinstown."

"That is clear," he said, lifting his handsome head from his hands. "And the signal should come from me. Listen, Loskiel; you shall expect that signal between midnight of Monday and dawn."

He rose, and I stood up; and, for a moment, we looked each other steadily in the eye. Then he smiled faintly, shaking his head.

"Not this time, Loskiel," he said, in a low voice. "My spectral pilot gives no sign. Death lies beyond the fires of Catharinstown. I know, Loskiel—I know."

"I, also," said I, in a low voice, taking his outstretched hand, "for you shall live to make material amends, as you have made them spiritually. Only the act of deep contrition lies between you and God's swift pardon. It were a sin to doubt it."

But he slowly shook his head, the faint smile lingering still. Then his grip closed suddenly on my hand, released it, and he swung on his heel.

"Attention!" he said crisply. "Sling packs! Fall in! Tr-r-railarms! March!"

XVIII

My Indians and I stood watching our riflemen as they swung to the east and trotted out of sight among the trees. Then, at a curt nod from me, the Indians lengthened their line, extending it westward along the height of land, and so spreading out that they entirely commanded the only outlet to the swamp below, by encircling both the trail and the headwaters of the evil-looking little stream.

Through the unbroken thatch of matted foliage overhead, no faintest ray of sunlight filtered—not even where the stream coiled its slimy way among the tamaracks and spruces. But south of us, along the ascending trail by which we had come, the westerling sun glowed red across a ledge of rock from which the hill fell sheer away, plunging into profound green depths, where unseen waters flowed southward to the Susquehanna.

Around the massive elbow of this ledge, our back trail, ascending into view, curved under shouldering boulders. Blueberry scrub, already turning gold and crimson, grew sparsely on the crag—cover enough for any watcher of the trail. And thither I crept and stretched me out flat in the bushes, where I could see the trail we had lately traversed, and look along it, far to our rear.

Presently, beside me came creeping the lithe Mohican, and lay down prone, smooth and golden and shining like a sleek panther in the sun.

"Is all well guarded, brother?" I whispered.

"Not even a wood-mouse could creep from the swamp unless our warriors see it."

"And when dark comes?"

"Our ears must be our eyes, Loskiel. But neither the Cat people nor the andastes will venture out of that morass, save only by the trail. And we shall have two watchers on it through the night."

"There is no other outlet?"

"None, except by the ridge Boyd travels. He blocks that pass with his twenty men."

"Then we should have their egress blocked, except only in the north?"

"Yes—unless they learn of this by magic," muttered the Mohican.

It was utterly useless for me to decry or ridicule his superstitions; and there was but one way to combat them.

"If witchcraft there truly be in Catha-



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

And, at the same moment, the stranger rounded the jutting shoulder of our crag, and came suddenly face to face with me in mid-trail. "Euan!" And I saw her gray eyes filling, and her lips quivering with words she could not utter. "Lois!" I repeated, as though stupefied, "Lois!"

The Hidden Children

rinestown," said I, "it is bad magic and therefore weak, and can avail nothing against true priesthood. What could the degraded acolytes of this red priest do against a consecrated sagamore of the Lenape—against an ensign of the Enchanted Clan? Else why do you wear your crest—or the great Ghost Bear there, rearing upon your breast?"

"It is true," he murmured uneasily. "What spell can Amochol lay upon us? What magic can he make to escape us? For the trail from Catharinestown is stopped by a Siwanois sagamore and a Mohican warrior. It is closed by an Oneida sachem, who stands watching. When the Ghost Bear and the Werwolf watch, then the whole forest watches with them—Loup, Blue Wolf, and Bear. Where, then, can the forest Cats slink out? Where can the filthy Carcajou escape?"

"Mayaro has spoken. It is a holy barrier that locks and bolts this door of secret evils. Under Tharon shall this trap remain inviolate till the last sorcerer be taken in it, the last demon be dead!"

"It is well," he said deliberately.

"Pray to your white God, Holder of Heaven, Master of Life and Death, that into our hands be delivered these scoffers who mock at him and at Tharon—these Cat murderers of little children, these polluters of the Three Fires. And in the morning I shall arise and look into the rising sun, and ask the same of the far god who made of me a Mohican, a Siwanois, and a sagamore. Let these things be done, brother, ere our hatchets redden in the flames of Catharinestown. For," he added naively, "it is well that God should know what we are about, lest he misunderstand our purpose."

I assented gravely.

The sun hung level, now, sending its blinding light straight into our eyes; and for precaution's sake we edged away under the blue shadows of the shrubbery, in case some far prowler note the light spots where our faces showed against the wall of green behind us.

"How far from Catharinestown," I asked, "lies the vale Yndaia?"

"It is the next valley to the westward. A pass runs through and a little brook. Pleasant it is, Loskiel, with grassy glades and half a hundred little springs which we call 'Eyes of the Inland Seas.'"

"You know," I said, "that in this valley all the hopes of Lois de Contrecoeur are centered."

"I know, Loskiel," he answered gravely.

"Do you believe her mother lives there still?"

"How shall I know, brother? If it were with these depraved and perverted Senecas as it is with other nations, the mother of a hidden child had lived there unmolested. Her lodge would have remained her sanctuary; her person had been respected; her hidden one undisturbed down to this very hour. But see how the accursed Senecas have dealt with her, so that, to save her child from Amochol, she sent it far beyond the borders of the Long House itself. What shame upon the Iroquois that the Senecas have defiled their purest law! May Leshi seize them all! So how, then, shall I know whether this white captive mother lives in the vale Yndaia still—or if she lives at all? Or if they have not made of her a priestess—a sorceress—perhaps the 'dreaming prophetess' of the Onon-hou-aroria—by reason of her throat being white?"

"What!" I exclaimed, startled.

"Did not the Erie boast a prophetess to confound us all?"

"I did not comprehend."

"Did he not squat, squalling at us from his cave, deriding every secret plan we entertained, and boasting that the Senecas had now a prophetess who could reveal to them everything their white enemies were plotting—because her own throat was white?"

I looked at him in silent horror.

"Hai-ee!" he said grimly. "If she still lives at all, it is because she dreams for Amochol. And this, Loskiel, has long remained my opinion. Else they had slain her on their altars long ago—strangled her as soon as ever she sent her child beyond their reach. For what she did broke sanctuary. According to the code of the Long House, the child belonged to the nation in which the mother was a captive. And, by the mother's act, this child was dedicated to a stainless marriage with some other child who also had been hidden. But the red sorcerer has perverted this ancient law; and when he would have taken the child to sacrifice it, then did the mother break the law of sanctuary and send her child away, knowing, perhaps, that the punishment for this is death.

"So you ask me whether or not she still lives. And I say to you that I do not know; only I judge by the boasting of that vile Erie Cat that she has bought her life of them by dreaming for their red priest. And if she has done this thing, and has deceived them until this day, then it is very plain to me that they believe her to be a witch. For it is true, Loskiel, that those who dream wield heavy influences among all Indians—and among the Iroquois in particular. Yet, with all this, I doubt not that, if she truly be alive, her life hangs by a single thread, ever menaced by the bloody knife of Amochol."

"I can not understand," said I, "why she sent out no appeal during her long captivity. Before this war broke, had her messengers to Lois gone to Sir William Johnson or to Guy Johnson, with word that the Senecas held in their country a white woman captive, she had been released within a fortnight, I warrant you!"

"Loskiel, had that appeal gone out, and a belt been sent to Catharinstown from Johnston or Guy Park, the Senecas would have killed her instantly and endured the consequences—even though Amherst himself was thundering on their western gate."

"Are you sure, Mayaro?"

"Certain, Loskiel. She could not have lived a single moment after the Senecas learned that she had sent out word of her captivity. That is their law, which even Amochol could not break."

"It was a mercy that our little Lois appealed not to his excellency, so that the word ran through Canada by flag to Haldimand."

"She might have done this," said the sagamore quietly. "She asked me, at Poundridge, how this might be accomplished. But when I made it clear to her that it meant her mother's death, she said no more about it."

"But pushed on blindly by herself," I exclaimed, "braving the somber Northland forests with her little ragged feet—half naked, hungry, friendless, and alone, facing each terror calmly, possessed only of her single purpose! O Sagamore of a warrior-clan that makes a history of brave deeds done, can you read in the records of your most ancient wampum a braver history than this?"

He said: "Let what this maid has done be written in the archives of the white

men, where are gathered the records of brave but unwise deeds. So shall those who come after you know how to praise and where to pity our little rosy pigeon of the forest. No rash young warrior of my own people, bound to the stake itself, can boast of greater bravery than this. And you, blood-brother to a Siwanqis, shall witness what I say."

After a silence I said: "They must have passed Wyoming already. At this hour, our little Lois may be secure under the guns of Easton. Do you not think so, Mayaro?"

As he made no answer, I glanced around at him and found him staring fixedly at the trail below us.

"What do you see on our back trail?" I whispered.

"A man, Loskiel—if it be not a deer."

A moment—and I also saw something moving far below us, among the trees. As yet it was only a mere spot in the dim light of the trail, slowly ascending the height of land. Nearer, nearer it came, until, at length, we could see that it was a man. But no rifle slanted across his shoulder.

"He must be one of our own people," I said, puzzled. "Somebody sends us a messenger. Is he white or Indian?"

"White," said the sagamore briefly, his eyes still riveted on the approaching figure, which now I could see was clothed in deer-skin shirt and leggings.

"He carries neither pack nor rifle; only a knife and pouch. He is a wood-running fool!" I said, disgusted. "Why do they send us such a forest-running batman, when they have Oneidas at headquarters, and *coureurs de bois* to spare who understand their business?"

"I make nothing of him," murmured the Mohican, his eyes fairly glittering with excitement and perplexity.

Once the man halted and looked up at our ledge of rock, where the last sun-rays still lingered, then lightly continued the ascent. And I, turning to the Mohican for some possible explanation of this amazing sight ere we crept out to closer ambush, found Mayaro staring through the trees with a glassy and singular expression which changed swiftly to astonishment and then to utter blankness.

"Etho!" he exclaimed bluntly, springing to his feet behind the nearer trees, regardless whether or not the stranger saw him.

The Hidden Children

"Go forward now, Loskiel. This is a fool's business—and badly begun. Now, let a white man's wisdom finish it."

I, too, had risen in surprise, stepping backward, also, in order that the trees might screen me. And, at the same moment, the stranger rounded the jutting shoulder of our crag, and came suddenly face to face with me in mid-trail.

"Euan!"

So astounded was I that my rifle fell clattering from my nerveless hand as Lois sprang forward and caught my shoulders with both her hands. And I saw her gray eyes filling, and her lips quivering with words she could not utter.

"Lois!" I repeated, as though stupefied, "Lois!"

"Oh, Euan! Euan! I thought I would never, never come up with you!" she whimpered. "I left the bateau where it touched at Towanda Creek and hid in the woods and dressed me in the Oneida dress you gave me. Then, by the first batman who passed, I sent a message to Lana saying that I was going back to—to join you. Are you displeased?"

Her trembling hands clasped my shoulders tighter, and her face drew closer, so that her sweet, excited breath fell on my cheek.

"Listen!" she stammered. "I desire to tell you everything. I will tell you all, Euan. I ran back along the trail, meeting the boat-guard, batmen, and the sick horses all along the way to Tioga, where they took me over on a raft of logs. I paid them three hard shillings. Then Colonel Shreve heard of what I had been about and sent a soldier after me, but I avoided the fort, Euan, and went boldly up through the deserted camps until I came to where the army had crossed. Some teamsters mending transport-wagons gave me bread and meat enough to fill my pouch; and one of them, a kindly giant, took me over the Chemung dry-shod, I clinging to his broad back like a very cat—and all o' them a-laughing fit to burst! Are you displeased, dear lad? Then, just at night, I came up with the rear-guard where they were searching for strayed cattle; and I stowed myself away in a broken-down wagon, full of powder—quietly, like a mouse, no one dreaming that I was not the slender youth I looked. So none molested me where I lay amid the powder-casks and sacking."

She smiled wistfully, and stood caressing my arms with her eager little hands, as though to calm the wrath to come.

"I heard your regiment's pretty conch horn in the morning," she said, "and slipped out of my wagon and edged forward amid all that swearing, sweating confusion, noticed not at all by anybody, save when a red-head Jersey sergeant bawled at me to man a rope and haul at the mired cannon with the others. But I was deaf just then, Euan, and got free o' them with nothing worse than a sound cursing from the sergeant; and away across the creek I legged it, where I hid in the bush until the firing began and the horrid shouting on the ridge. Then it was that, badly scared, I crept through the Indian grass like a hunted hare, and saw Lieutenant Boyd there, and his men halted across the trail. And very soon our cannon began, and then it was that I saw you and your Indians filing out to the right. So I followed you. Oh, Euan, are you very angry? Because, dear lad, I have had so lonely a trail, what with keeping clear of your party so that you might not catch me and send me back, and what with losing you after you had left the main-trodden trail. Save for the marks you left on trees, I had been utterly lost—and must have perished, no doubt—" She looked at me with melting eyes. "Think on that, Euan, ere you grow too angry and are cruel with me!"

"Cruel? Lois, you have been more heartless than I ever—"

"There! I knew it! Your anger is about to burst its dreadful bounds—"

"Child! What is there to say or do now? What is there left for me, save to offer you what scant protection I may—good God!—and take you forward with us in the morning? This is a cruel, unmerited perplexity you have caused me, Lois. What unkind inspiration prompted you to do this rash, mad, foolish thing! How could you so conduct? What can you hope to accomplish in all this wicked and bloody business that now confronts us? How can I do my duty—how perform it to the letter—with you beside me—with my very heart chilling to water at thought of your peril—"

"Hush, dearest lad," she whispered, tightening her fingers on my sleeve. "All in the world I care for lies in this place where we now stand—or near it. Have I not told you that I must go to Catharinestown?"



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

"A promised bride has spoken." She bowed her head, took my hand in hers,
and laid it lightly on her heart

The Hidden Children

How could I remain behind when every tie I have in all the world was tugging at my heart to draw me hither? You ask me what I can do—what I can hope to accomplish. God knows! But my mother and my lover are here—and how could I stay away if there was a humble chance that I might do some little thing to aid her—to aid you, Euan?

"Why do you scowl at me? Try me. Test me. I am tough as an Indian youth, strong and straight and supple—and as tireless. See—I am not wearied with the trail! I am not afraid. I can do what you do. If you fast, I can fast, too; when you go thirsty, I can endure it, also, and you may not even hope to outravel me, Euan, for I am inured to sleeplessness, to hunger, to fatigue by two years' vagabondage—hardened of limb and firm of body, self-taught in self-denial, in quiet endurance, in stealth, and patience. Oh, Euan! Make me your comrade, as you would take a younger brother to school him in the hardy ways of life you know so well! I will be no burden to you; I will serve you humbly and faithfully—prove docile, obedient, and grateful to the end. And if the end comes in the guise of death—Euan—Euan! Why may I not share that also with you? For the world's joy dies when you die, and my body might as well die with it."

So eager and earnest her argument, so tightly she clung to my arms, so pleading and sweet her ardent face, upturned, with the tears scarcely dry under her lashes, that I found nought to answer her, and could only look into her eyes—deep, deep into those gray-blue wells of truth—troubled to silence by her present plight and mine.

I could not take her back now, and also keep my tryst with Boyd at Catharines-town. I could not leave her here by this trail, even guarded—had I the guards to spare—for soon in our wake would come thundering the maddened *débris* of the Chemung battle, pell-mell, headlong through the forests, desperate, with terror leading and fury lashing at their heels.

I laid my hands heavily upon her firm, young shoulders, and strove to think the while I studied her; but the enchantment of her confused my mind, and I saw only the crisp and clustering curls, and clear young eyes looking into mine, and the lips scarce parted, hanging breathless on my words.

"O boy-girl comrade!" I said, in a low, unsteady voice. "Little boy-girl born to do endless mischief in this wide and wind-swept forest-world of men! What am I to say to you, who have your will of everyone beneath the sun? Who am I to halt the Starry Dancers, or bar your wayward trail when Tharon himself has hidden you, and the Little People carry to you 'winged moccasins for flying feet as light and swift!' For truly I begin to think it has been long since woven in the silvery and eternal wampum—belt after belt, string twisted around string—that you shall go to Catharines-town unscathed.

"Where she was born returns the rosy forest-pigeon to her native tree for mating. Whitethroat—Whitethroat—your course is flown. For this is Amochol's frontier; and by to-morrow night we enter Catharines-town—thou and I, little Lois—two hidden children—one hidden by the western gate, one by the eastern gate's dark threshold, 'hidden in the husks.' How shall it be with us now, O little rosy spirit of the home-wood? My Indians will ask. What shall I say to them concerning you?"

"All laws break of themselves before us twain, who, having been hidden, are prepared for mating—where we will—and when. And if the long flight be truly ended—and the home-forests guard our secret—and if Tharon be God also—and his stars the altar-lights—and his river-mist my veil—" She faltered, and her clear gaze became confused. "Why should your Indians question you?" she asked.

The last ray of the sun reddened the forest, lingered, faded, and went out in ashes.

I said: "God and Tharon are one. Priest and sagamore, clergyman and sachem, minister, ensign, *Roya-neh*—red men or white, all are consecrated before the Master of Life. If in these Indians' eyes you are still to remain sacred, then must you promise yourself to me, little Lois. And let the sagamore perform the rite at once."

"Betroth myself, Euan?"

"Yes, under the rite of the hidden children. Will you do this—so that my Indians can lay your hands upon their hearts? Else they may turn from you now—perhaps prove hostile."

"I had desired to have you take me from my mother's arms."

"And so I will, in marriage—if she be alive to give you."

"Then—what is this we do?"

"It is our 'white bridal.'"

"Summon the sagamore," she said faintly.

And so it was done there, I prompting her with her responses, and the mysterious rite witnessed by the priesthood of two nations—sachem and sagamore, Iroquois and Algonquin, with the tall lodge-poles of the pines confirming it, and the pale ghost-flowers on the moss fulfilling it, and the stars coming one by one to nail our lodge door with silver nails, and the night winds, enchanted, chanting the karennas of the Uncut Corn.

And now the final and most sacred symbol of betrothal was at hand; and the Oneida sachem drew away, and the Yellow Moth and the Night Hawk stood aside, with heads quietly averted, leaving the sagamore alone before us. For only a sagamore of the Enchanted Clan might stand as witness to the mystery, where now the awful, viewless form of Tharon was supposed to stand, white winged and plumed, and robed like the Eight Thunders in snowy white.

"Listen, Loskiel," he said, "my younger brother, blood-brother to a Siwanois. Listen, also, O Rosy-throated Pigeon of the Woods—home from the unseen flight to mate at last!"

He plucked four ghost-flowers, and cast the pale blossoms, one by one, to the four great winds.

"O untainted winds that blow the Indian corn," he said, "winds of the wilderness, winds of the sounding skies—clean and pure as ye are, not one of you has blown the green and silken blankets loose from these, our hidden children, nestling unseen, untouched, unstained, close cradled in a green embrace! Nor wind, nor rain, nor hail, not the fierce heat of many summers have revealed these hidden ones, stripped them of the folded verdure that conceals them still, each wrapped within the green leaves of the corn.

"Continue to listen, winds of the sounding skies. Let the Eight White-plumed Thunders listen. An ensign of the Magic Clan bears witness under Tharon. A sagamore veils his face. Let Tharon hear these children when they speak. Let Tamanund listen!"

Standing straight and tall there in the starlight, he drew his blanket across his eyes.

Slowly, timidly, in compliance with my

whispered bidding, the slender, trembling hands of Lois unlaced my throat-points to the shoulder, baring my chest. Then she said aloud, but in a voice scarce audible, I prompting every word:

"It is true! Under the folded leaves a hidden youth is sleeping. I bid him sleep awhile. I promise to disturb no leaf. This is the white bridal. I close what I have scarcely parted. I bid him sleep this night. When—when——"

I whispered, prompting her, and she found her voice, continuing:

"When at his lodge door they shall come softly and lay shadows to bar it, a moon to seal it, and many stars to nail it fast, then, in the dark within, I shall hear the painted quiver rattle as he puts it off, and the antlers fall clashing to the ground. Only the green and tender cloak of innocence shall endure—a little while—then, falling, enfold us. A promised bride has spoken."

She bowed her head, took my hand in hers, and laid it lightly on her heart; then straightened up, with a long-drawn, quivering breath, and stood, eyes closed, as I unlaced her throat-points, parting the fawn-skin cape till the soft thrums lay on her snowy shoulders.

"It is true!" I whispered. "Under the folded leaves a hidden maid lies sleeping. I bid her sleep awhile; I bid her dream in innocence through this white bridal night. I promise to disturb no leaf that sheathes her. I now refold and close again what I have scarcely touched and opened. I bid her sleep.

"When on my lodge door they nail the Oneida stars, and seal my door with the moon of Tharon, and lay long shadows there to bar it, then, I, within the darkness there, shall hear the tender rustle of her clinging husks, parting to cradle two where one alone had slept since she was born."

Gently I drew the points, closing the cape around her slender throat, knotted the laces, smoothed out the thrums, took her small hands, and laid them on my breast.

One by one, the stately Indians came to make their homage, bending their war-crests proudly and placing her hands upon their painted breasts. Then they went away in silence, each to his proper post, no doubt. Yet, to be certain, I desired to make my rounds, and bade Lois await me there. But I had not proceeded three paces when—lo!—of a sudden she was at



DRAWN BY HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

And so we lay until the dark forms, gliding from the forest, summoned me to mount my guard,
and Lois awoke with a little sigh, sat upright, then sprang to her feet
to face the coming dawn alone with me

my side, laughing her soft defiance at me in the darkness.

"No orders do I take save what I give myself," she said. "Which is no mutiny, Euan, and no insubordination, either, seeing that you and I are one—or are like to be when the brigade chaplain passes—if the tories meddle not with his honest scalp. Come! Honest, Euan, shall we make our rounds together? Or must I go alone?"

And she linked her arm in mine and put one foot forward, looking up at me with all the light mischief of the very boy she seemed in her soft rifle-dress and leggings, and the bright hair crisply curling round her mole-skin cap.

"Have a care of the trees, then, little minx," I said.

"Pooh! Can you not see in the dark?"

"Can you?"

"Surely. When you and I went to the spring Waiontha, I needed not your lantern-light to guide me."

"I see not well by night," I admitted.

"You *do* see well by night—through my two eyes! Are we not one? How often must I repeat it that you and I are one! One! One! O Loskiel—stealer of hearts, if you could only know how often on my knees I am before you—how truly I adore, how humbly, scarcely daring to believe my heart that tells me such a tale of magic and enchantment—after these barren, loveless years! Mark! Yonder stands the Gray Feather. Is that his post?"

"Wonder-eyes, I see him not! Wait—aye, you are right. And he is at his post. Pass to the left, little minx."

And so we made the rounds, finding every Indian except the sagamore at his post. He lay asleep. And after we had returned to our southern ledge of rock, and I had spread my blanket for her and laid my pack to pillow her, I picked up my rifle and rose from my knees.

"And you?" she asked.

"I stand guard across the trail below."

"Why, when all except the Siwanos are watching? The Night Hawk is there. Stretch yourself here beside me and try to sleep."

"Do you mean to go on guard with me?"

"Do you dream that I shall let you stand your guard alone, young sir?"

"This is folly, Lois—"

"Euan, you vex me. Here is sufficient blanket-room and pillow."

So I stretched myself out and looked up, open-eyed, into darkness.

"Sleep well," she whispered, smothering a little laugh.

"Sleep safely, Lois."

I said presently, "This is our 'white bridal,' Lois."

"Save that the sagamore is but a heathen priest, truly I feel myself already wedded to you, so solemn was our pretty rite. Dare you kiss me, Euan? You never have. Christians betrothed may kiss each other once, I think."

"Not such as we—if the rite means anything to us."

"Why?"

"Not on the white-bridal night—if we regard this rite as sacred."

"I feel its sacredness. That is why I thought no sin if you should kiss me—on such a night." She sat up in her blanket, and I sat up, too.

"I am weeping," she said.

"You are laughing!"

"No; I am weeping," she insisted.

"Why?"

"You do not love me," she remarked, kicking off one ankle-moccasin.

"I love your beautiful foot, little mouse," I said, laughing.

"My foot? I consent."

"The other one, also."

"I thank you, O Loskiel! I shall presently slay you and go to sleep."

There fell a silence, then,

"Do you not know in your heart how it is with me?" I said unsteadily.

She lay down, facing me.

"In my heart I know, beloved above all men! But I am like a child with you. And everything you say delights me—and all you do—or refrain from doing—thrills me with content. It was so true and sweet of you to leave my lips untouched. I adore you for it—but, then, I had adored you if you had kissed me, also. Always your decision pleasures me."

After a long while I spoke cautiously. She lay asleep, her lips scarce parted; but in her sleep she seemed to hear my voice, for one arm stole out in the dark and closed around my neck.

And so we lay until the dark forms, gliding from the forest, summoned me to mount my guard, and Lois awoke with a little sigh, sat upright, then sprang to her feet to face the coming dawn alone with me.

Woman's Greatest Need

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

WOMAN'S greatest need to-day, above all other needs, is practical common sense—the ability to reason from a common-sense standpoint and the will-power to put such reasoning into daily use.

America is rich in women of shining qualities. Its skies are starred with women of talent, women of high ideals, women of vast ambitions, women of large charities, women of brilliant intellect.

In art, in literature, in music, in reforms, in business, and in social life, these women shed a luster which reaches across wide seas and illuminates the world.

But one who basks long in this radiance (no matter from which one of these social centers the light is shed) soon misses the steady, clear ray of common sense. Uncommon sense has blurred that ray by its glaring light. And in many instances the winds of publicity have blown it out.

It required uncommon sense for woman first to awaken to the realization that she had every moral and natural right to equal franchise. And uncommon sense has enabled her to stand firm during the long years through which she has been battling for that right.

But she has shown her pitiful lack of common sense, in the last score of years, by her persistent acquisition of masculine, old-world vices while she was proclaiming from the housetops that the race needed her refining and uplifting influence in politics. Twenty years ago the woman who took a whiff of a cigarette did so in secret, and from either a mood of youthful bravado or from an acquired habit, like that of a drug victim.

To-day three-fourths of the women prominent in our social life and in our artistic circles are confirmed smokers. They carry their cigarette cases and offer the weed to their guests and callers as men offer cigars. And the custom is growing.

One has only to glance at the windows of

the jeweler to see how universal and acknowledged the habit has become. A cigarette case for "ladies" is a leading attraction with every jeweler at the holiday season. And more and more, in public and in private, the smoking woman is in evidence. The woman who is making brilliant speeches and offering irrefutable arguments in favor of equal franchise, asks why the cigarette habit has anything to do with the question, since men have always smoked and always voted. But herein she exhibits her lamentable lack of common sense.

Clear reasoning must indicate to her the lack of wisdom in emulating the undesirable habits of the sex with which she claims her equality. If she is to lift politics from the mud in which it has long made its bed, the cigarette will not prove an effective lever. The anti-suffragist is quite as frequently found to be a devotee of Madame Nicotine as her larger minded sister. And her lack of common-sense reasoning is shown in her plea for the preservation of the sanctity and beauty of the home life, while she endangers the physical and mental welfare of her unborn children by the use of a slow poison. Argue as we will of the importance of good fatherhood for children, the fact stubbornly stares us in the face that a mother carries her unborn child under her heart for three-quarters of a year, and that her condition, mentally and physically, during that period is of more vital importance to the child than the condition of the father. Not long ago the results of scientific experiments made by physicians, during a considerable period of time, relative to the use of tobacco were given to the public. The conclusion was reached that the habitual use of tobacco in any form reduced the mental capacity ten per cent. When a woman persists not only in indulging but in defending the indulgence of a habit which affects the nervous system, fouls the breath, stains the fingers, and turns her salon into

a saloon, there is surely an evidence that she lacks that rarest of qualities—common sense. Yet brilliant, gifted, cultured women, occupying high positions in the social and intellectual world, may be heard any day defending the cigarette habit.

So universal is the custom in England, that the woman who does not take the proffered cigarette after luncheon or dinner is regarded with polite surprise. And this is the land where woman is, rightfully, even when wrong in her methods, most vigorously demanding the ballot.

WOMAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD DRESS

The absence of common-sense reasoning has been ever evident in woman's attitude toward the subject of dress. It was never more evident than at the present day.

The woman who does not regard dress as an important item in this mortal phase of life, errs in judgment.

Just as nature is becomingly and beautifully clothed, and indulges in changes of costumes at various periods of the year, and seems ever to delight in its attire, so should human nature find pleasure in suitable and becoming apparel. Science tells us that the flowers were all white long and long ago, and that they gradually evolved their wonderful and variegated shades to please the color-loving insects, who helped them propagate. Therefore, it is only in accordance with nature's design if woman seek to adorn herself to attract the eye of man.

But when, instead of making herself beautiful and attractive, instead of using individual taste and studying her own type and adapting and modifying the prevailing modes to suit her needs and her purse, woman allows herself to become the accentuation of eccentricity, immodesty, and extravagance, she again exemplifies her lack of common sense.

A woman who used good sense in her reasoning would know that indecent fashions never emanated from decent sources.

She would know that the woman who exhibits her bare flesh on the street to the multitude, attracts attention but never admiration. And here is another delicate line of demarcation which the masses of women seem unable to determine, because of their lack of plain common sense—the line which separates attention from admiration. The man who said that the absolutely well-dressed woman always passed unnoticed,

was as mistaken in his idea of what constitutes good taste as if he had said that the most exquisite scenes in nature were always unnoticed by the passer-by.

A rose-bush in full flower will cause the lover of beauty to arrest his step and catch his breath in silent admiration, or to exclaim in delight.

A woman's apparel may be as beautiful and as appropriate as any of the robes of nature, and may cause the observer to feel the same delight as he beholds her; but the attention which he bestows upon her must not be mistaken for the sensation which the grotesquely or immodestly attired woman causes when she goes forth to astonish a gaping world.

In spite of this simple fact, thousands of respectable women who believe themselves to be refined and modest, follow the beck and call of some absurd fashion, and seem to enjoy the stares of mixed masses of human beings and to imagine those stares proceed from admiration and envy. And stranger still, when the men who love them and who hold their reputations dear, object to having them stared at in this manner, and for such cause, the solicitude is mistaken for jealousy and their spirit of protection for tyranny. Again the lack of common sense.

MAKERS OF FASHIONS

There are three types of women who can afford to make their own fashions: the young beautiful woman of large wealth and secure social position; the old and poor woman, and the religious sister of some order. All others limit their usefulness and lessen their power to give and receive pleasure by refusing to bend to any of the decrees of Dame Fashion.

The wearing of small bonnets when large ones are the vogue, or voluminous skirts when clinging draperies are demanded, simply makes a woman unpleasantly conspicuous, and accomplishes no admirable end and illustrates no worthy principle.

But the woman possessed of good common sense will neither go to this extreme, nor to the other, of making herself a slave to every eccentric whim of fickle fashion. She will modify and adapt the modes to suit her appearance, and the fashion which renders her ridiculous or unattractive, she will refuse to accept.

And here again we may see how few of the

sex possess the common sense which enables them to know when they are ridiculous and unattractive. A glance through our most authentic fashion magazines at the present time, and a glance at any assembly of women on the street, or in any drawing-room, or in any fashionable church or club, is sufficient to prove the fact that only a small minority of women have the good sense and the good taste, which enables them to bring order out of the chaos and beauty out of the bedlam which have been let loose in the world of fashion recently.

The elegantly and richly dressed woman who returns from her promenade before admiring eyes and enters a meagerly furnished and disorderly home, is a sight to make men and angels weep. Yet thousands of such women may be found in the circles where salaried men are striving to maintain a family on a small income, and where the wife's ideals of happiness are centered on fashionable attire.

These women form a vast multitude, and they are not infrequently women of brilliant mental attainments. Yet they belong to a crude aboriginal order and are only partially evolved. In all savage races one sees a love of personal adornment taking precedence of the home-making instinct. That instinct marks a distinct step forward in the evolution of a higher humanity. A beautiful, well-ordered, comfortable home, however simple in its adornments, a home where evidences of personal interest and feminine taste are everywhere visible and where an atmosphere of peace and content is felt by all who enter, is an anteroom to paradise. An untidy or carelessly dressed woman in such a home would be a jarring note in a symphony. But the woman of good common sense would never permit her wardrobe to rob her home.

WOMAN'S CONDUCT AND DIVORCE

In the pandemonium of divorce which exists in America and Europe to-day, one may easily trace the lack of common sense of woman as a leading factor.

When men stray from the path of rectitude and play with danger, they know what they are doing and know they are not justified; but they indulge their selfish impulses and defy consequences.

When a married man or a bachelor crosses the boundary line of friendship, and trespasses on the realm of passion where

dwells some woman who is not his to woo, he knows exactly where his pathway leads. But three-fourths of the women who figure in the divorce courts as co-respondents, or whose affinities are named as co-respondents by angry husbands, have drifted into the compromising situation through a lack of common sense. They have listened to the platitudes about Platonic love; they have allowed themselves to enjoy attentions which flattered their vanity, and they have gradually been led into compromising situations by failing to take a common-sense view of the subject from the start.

There is always an hour when a woman knows that a man has reached the boundary line; when she knows that to encourage him to proceed, means the changing of the friend into the lover, and when she knows that the future is in her hands.

But it is only the exceptional woman who will face such a situation with direct common sense, and refuse to deceive herself, or allow herself to be deceived, as to the ultimate goal if she does not change her route.

The lack of common-sense reasoning has led many a woman to the unhappy position of a neglected wife.

WHY WIVES ARE NEGLECTED

Love and loyalty, even when accompanied by unselfishness and economy, often fail to render a man happy in his domestic life if there is a woeful lack of tact or a superabundance of nerves in his home. It is a lack of common-sense reasoning which causes a woman always to want to talk or be talked to when the man wants to read or relax; to want to go out when his mood is to stay at home; to want to stay at home when he shows a desire to go out; to become hysterical or sullen when he praises another woman; to be disorderly in her habits, or to carry order to the extent of eliminating comfort from the home, and to declare she will go home to her mother when he objects to any of these small but irritating peculiarities. The misdeeds of man in the conjugal relation are usually large, and cry forth from the housetops to all the world, and are the result of undeveloped moral qualities. The misdeeds of women are like small insects which swarm in the air and destroy comfort, and they are the result of a lack of common-sense reasoning. Let us have a school for the cultivation of this quality.

A Fish Story

By Childe Harold



I

Aloysius caught some fishes and he put them in a pail,
And he took them to an artist and he tried to make a sale.
And the artist at his easel, with his palette and his knife,
Said, "Of course I'll have to buy them
If you hang them up and dry them;
But I hope you will not do it, for a fish once saved my life.



II

"I studied art in Paris, where there's nothing to embarrass
A searcher after Truth—unless he bends or breaks the law.
And all was most propitious till I took to drawing fishes,
When I ran into this question, which I put to you with awe:
As a study in perspective, though the subject is elective,
Should an artist draw a fish to scale or scale a fish to draw?



III

"I talked to every fisherman I met beside the Seine;
 All experts piscatorial were asked to shed their light;
 I cabled to my congressman, at Madawaska, Maine—
 But not a single one of them could tell me which was right.
 Truth having proved a laggard, I became both pale and haggard;
 No longer could I work or eat or even sleep at night.



IV

"Now it happened on a Monday (for the day before was Sunday,
 And it's curious how Mondays follow Sundays down the hall)
 That, in a fish-stall staring, I beheld a kippered herring.
 And the answer came to meet me, and I caught it like a ball
 Since then I've painted catfish, for, as you'll remember, that fish,
 Though a succulent and fat fish, hasn't any scales at all."

